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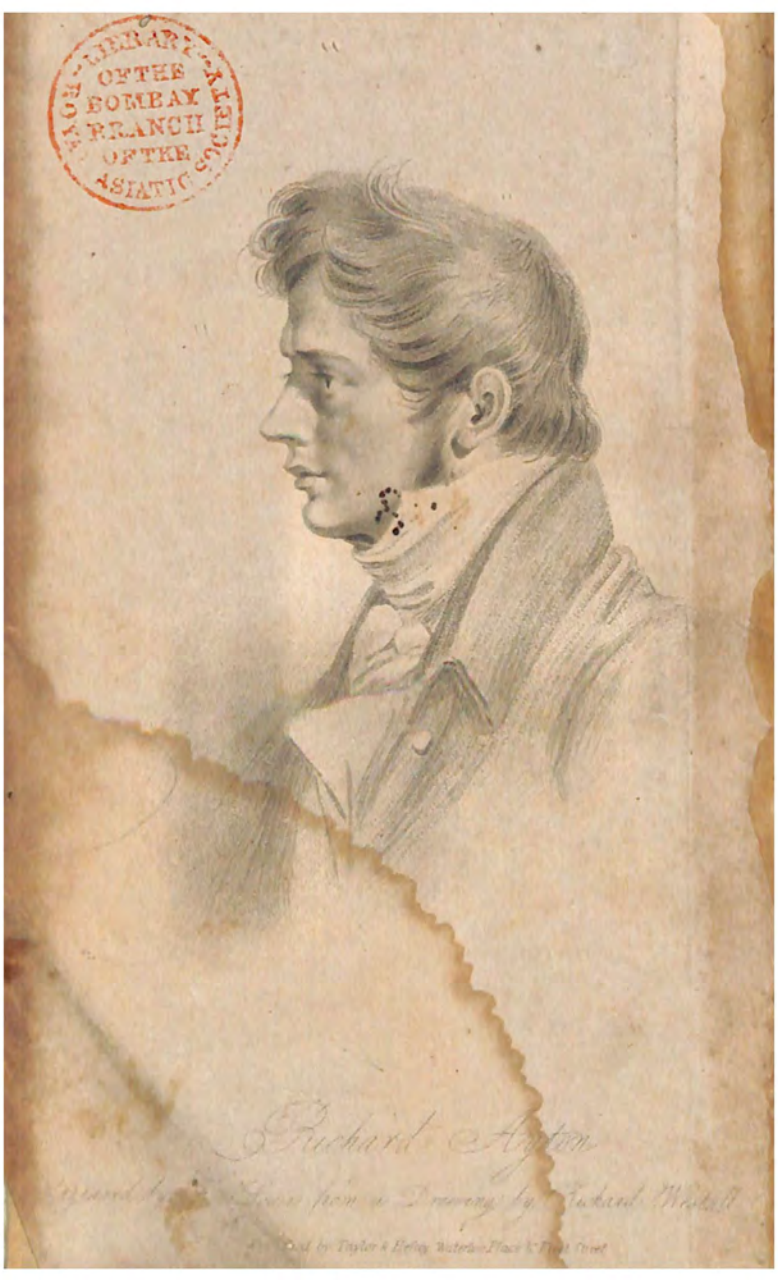

Richard Ayton

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ESSAYS

AND

SKETCHES OF CHARACTER.

BY THE LATE

RICHARD AYTON, ESQ.

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WITH

A MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE.

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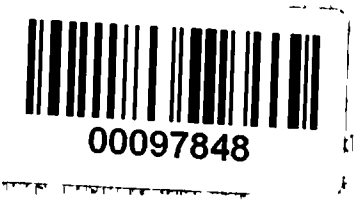

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MEMOIR.

RICHARD AYTON, the author of the following essays, was born in London in the year 1786. He was the fourth son of the late William Ayton, esq. of Macclesfield in Cheshire, and the grandson of the late William Ayton, esq. banker of Lombard-street. He received the first rudiments of his education at the late Mr. Revoult's at Walworth, but upon the removal of his father from London to Macclesfield, in the year 1794, he was placed at the grammar school of that town, under the tuition of the Rev. Dr. Davies: here he was indefatigable in his studies, and, by his own zeal and the friendly aid of his most able and kind instructor, he became an excellent Greek and Latin scholar. At this period of his life

he distinguished himself by his good sense, his humour, his copious flow of words, and his happy selection of them; and these qualifications determined his father to educate him for the bar, and to send him to college; but the lamented death of his father, and that of his grandfather, which took place within a few months of each other, in the years 1799 and 1800, so diminished the resources of his family, that the idea of sending him to college was relinquished, although the rest of the plan was retained; and it was thought advisable in furtherance of it to send him for a year, to study the law under an eminent solicitor at Manchester: here his industry forsook him, and it is tolerably certain that he reaped no professional benefit from this probation. At the end of the year he came to London, and was placed with one of our first special pleaders for two years: but his dislike of the law gained ground daily, and he passed his time in any way rather than in the study of it. At the completion of these two years, he became of age; and as soon as he attained the absolute control of his property, he quitted the law and went to reside on the coast of Sussex, in

the vain hope of limiting his expenses to the smallness of his income.

A short time convinced him of the error of his calculation, but did not alter his mode of life: he continued to employ a portion of his time in great bodily exercise, and devoted the remainder to an extensive though desultory reading. In his youth he had been rather a timid boy, and was supposed by his brothers somewhat deficient in constitutional courage; but as he advanced towards manhood, a moral courage had supplied this original defect; and during his residence on the coast he often voluntarily braved the dangers of the sea in the most fearless manner: frequently he went out in boisterous weather on board one of the fishing-boats, exposed of course to all the privations of his hardy companions, and often passed the night in alternately aiding them in their pursuits, and in contemplating the beautiful or awful scenes by which he was surrounded. He at length purchased a boat sufficiently small to be managed by himself alone, and in this he passed the greatest part of his time; and by this means grew so well acquainted

with the southern coast, that more than once, when in bad weather a distressed foreign ship has been off the town where he resided, making signals for a pilot, when none happened to be on shore, he has launched his little skiff and gone to her assistance, and carried her safe into her destined haven. On one occasion he had nearly perished, for, having spent some hours in fishing at a considerable distance from the shore, he was overtaken near nightfall by a violent storm blowing directly off the land; his sail therefore was useless to him, and his utmost exertions with his oars could barely keep him stationary: in this situation he remained for some hours, till his strength decreasing, he found himself fast drifting on to the Margate sands, the breakers upon which every flash of lightning disclosed with terrible distinctness! The imminent peril in which he was gave him fresh energy, and for another hour he struggled against the death which seemed to await him, and which the smallest remission of his efforts would have rendered inevitable, when a change of wind relieved him from his danger, and enabled him to reach the shore about five miles

from his home, where he arrived early in the morning in a state of extreme exhaustion.

The death of one of his brothers in the year 1811, which distressed him deeply, occasioned a change in his mind, and brought him to London, where he passed nearly two years on a visit to a friend. He could not, however, be persuaded to resume the study of the law; but in aid of his small income he accepted a place in one of the public offices, the duties of which were so monotonous, and the salary so small, that he gladly relinquished it, and accepted the invitation of Mr. W. Daniell, to accompany him in his projected tour round the coast of Great Britain for the purpose of writing an account of it. He occupied two summers in this pursuit, and the two first volumes of that work are written by him, and from them some extracts will be found in this volume. An alteration in Mr. W. Daniell's plan, by which the literary portion of the work was to be materially diminished, induced Mr. R. Ayton to decline proceeding with it; and he now turned his attention to dramatic writing, and produced an admirable farce on the subject of Craniology; but

although it was supported by the great actor for whom the principal character was designed, it was rejected by the managers, from an apprehension that the mass of the public was not sufficiently acquainted with the subject to give it a chance of success. His next work was a farce called "Who can I be?" which was played one night at Covent Garden with considerable approbation, but was not repeated. His next farce, called "The Six Physicians," was played at Covent Garden, but did not succeed. He afterwards produced a comedy and a melodrame, neither of which was accepted by the managers. He next presented to the manager of the English Opera House some light pieces freely translated from the French: two of them, "The Rendezvous" and "The Ladies among themselves," were eminently successful; but the emolument he derived from this source was so trifling as to determine him to write no more for the stage.

About this time his health being considerably impaired, he imagined that a short sea voyage would be beneficial to him; he therefore went by sea to Scarborough: he remained there three

months, and with recruited health and spirits prepared for his return to London: unhappily, his fondness for the sea made him overlook the lateness of the season, and determined him to come back in the same way which had afforded him so much pleasure a short time before, and accordingly he took his passage in a merchant-vessel; but the ship proved leaky, the crew inexperienced, the wind adverse, and the weather tempestuous. It was nearly three weeks before he reached London, and, during the whole of that time, the cabin in which he slept was drenched by the seas which the vessel shipped, and he himself was obliged for his own sake to perform all the offices of a sailor,—and he was, in truth, the ablest on board, and by his strength and activity in cutting away the wreck of the foretop-mast, he saved the ship from being wrecked. In this service he either strained, or received a violent blow upon one of his ankles, the consequence of which was a wound which could not be healed, and which growing gradually worse, at length confined him to his bedroom for more than twelve months. In the spring of 1821 he was sufficiently recovered

to go by slow journeys to the coast of Sussex, and there he regained the use of his ankle sufficiently to walk without crutches; but his general health had sustained a severe shock, and continued in a most precarious state. During the last eighteen months of his stay there, the essays which form this volume were written,—they were written, therefore, under the pressure of a most painful disease, and under the still heavier pressure of mental anxiety, arising from a firm belief that he should not recover. What might not have been expected from such a mind under happier circumstances! In the month of July, 1823, he became so much worse, that his removal to London was absolutely necessary for the benefit of medical advice:—he bore his journey without much apparent fatigue, but his complaint gained daily ground.

Immediately on his arrival he was visited by Dr. Darling, who, with a liberality that characterizes him, attended him unremittingly and gratuitously at his lodgings. Shortly afterwards his health, for some days, appeared to improve; and there was reason to hope that his spirits might rally, and his

constitution recover its former strength. But a cold which he caught soon after he had finished his beautiful story of "Sea-Roamers" frustrated all the expectations of his friends. He was obliged to take to his bed, and in a few days breathed his last. Dr. Darling visited him two or three times every day; and all that medical skill and kindness could effect was done for him. But it was too late. The system was too much debilitated by former attacks to resist this, and he sank into the grave apparently an old man at the age of 36 or 37. He lamented his approaching death only as it prevented hm from fulfilling the many plans he had formed of benefiting the world, as far as he could, by his writings. His worldly prospects had certainly nothing in them to make him in love with life, and his views of death were cheerful and serene. But still for the above purpose, and for that alone, he wished to live. All his plans however died with him, for not a leaf of manuscript was found at his lodgings after his death. How much he might have done, we have the best means of judging from what he did. And from a review of the essays in this volume, it will

appear evident, that his power to instruct and delight the world by his writings fell nothing short of his inclination.

The character of Mr. Ayton's mind was vigour; that of his disposition was enthusiasm. Upon every subject, even the most trivial, he thought strongly, and felt deeply. This might, perhaps, have given both to his writings and conversation a tone of exaggeration; but it also bestowed upon them a liveliness and force which compelled notice, and generally drew admiration. It is impossible to read a sentence in the next portion of this volume without being struck with the originality of the conceptions and the energy of the language. Upon the most common-place topics, which we should have thought had been already worn thread-bare by preceding writers, our author is novel and eloquent. He sets his picture in a new light, and in a thousand lights. He appears rather to find a difficulty in rejecting than in raising new images. They are not only abundant, but exuberant. So accumulated, indeed, are the particulars of his descriptions, that we might impute them more to labour

than to luxuriance of mind, if we had not known the author. But his conversation and his most familiar letters were of the same stamp. He spoke with great fluency, yet with a degree of intense vigour scarcely below that which is exhibited in his essays. His letters also betray the same unpremeditated strength of mind, the same involuntary enthusiasm of disposition. We wish we could present our readers with a few of these, but they are of too personal and private a nature.

During his last illness at the sea-side he had been much visited by a person whose opinions upon sacred subjects were strongly tinctured with infidelity, and who had taken great pains to instil his principles into the mind of his auditor. His efforts, however, it appears, produced quite a contrary result to that which he had expected. The extravagance of his doctrines led Mr. Ayton to examine minutely both them and those to which they were opposed. He had not before, perhaps, deeply reflected on the subject of religion, but his illness, and the visit of this man, had a most beneficial effect upon him. Upon his arrival in London some weeks preceding

his death, he had become a determinedly religious character. He was perhaps rather more enthusiastic than he would have continued to be, yet his views of religion were sound and rational. His piety was the result of conviction, and his faith was supported and approved by his reason.

It will be seen, from the Essays which follow this brief memoir, that Mr. Ayton was a man of no common powers of mind, and of a very unusual goodness of disposition. They exhibit a never-ceasing advocacy of the best principles of the heart, the best affections of our nature; a playful wit, and an elegant fancy; striking thoughts, vivid images, and graphic descriptions: all expressed in language at once copious and energetic. The genius which pervades them must command our attention, as the goodness which dictated them deserves our approval.

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ON THE SPIRIT OF YOUTH IN THE YOUNG AND THE OLD.

The child is rich in hope, and longs to be a man; the man has his treasures in memory, and wishes that he had always been a child. We are all pleased to look back upon ourselves as school-boys, and recall, with a mournful tenderness, those thoughtless happy days when we had masters to instruct us that we were born to suffer and to die, but when the feeling was, that we had life within us, whose principle was enjoyment, and whose duration without end. Whether our school-days are the happiest of our lives is a contested question; but there can be no doubt, I think, as to those of them passed out of school. I have no great favour, I confess, for masters, and cannot conscientiously defend the agreeableness of lessons, or the pleasing propriety of being flogged for not attending to them; but the playground! and the holidays!—no, there is nothing

like them afterwards.—In estimating the happiness of a school-boy, people are apt to think more of the school than of the boy.—He is not happy in consequence of being at school, but in spite of it. I may incur some disgrace with elderly gentlemen, but I shall have all the boys on my side, I believe, when I admit, absolutely, that school is but a dreary place: it is not worse, however, than the after-schools in which men must learn to toil and suffer; while the boys have an advantage all their own, in the unconquerable sportiveness of their age. On this ground I am clearly disposed to conclude, that school-days are the happiest of our lives.

How beautiful is that law of playfulness, which governs the youth of all created animals! How glorious that short-lived era of the blood, when school-boys, and puppies, and kittens, caper and dance, by a sort of instinct, or necessity! This irresistible gaiety is not the result of superior health and strength: it is the exulting spirit of mere life in the newly born—an elementary joyousness, which requires no aid from without, which is not excited in them, but is a part of them. The child, in proof of its being, might say, in the spirit of the philosopher—I rejoice, therefore, I am.—We, whom years

and knowledge have invested with the prerogative of being serious, smile at the ecstasies of youthful levity, with a sympathy moderated by contempt. Poor, foolish creature, how happy it allows itself to be! Pleasant enough, we exclaim; but, ah! if it knew what was to come! We shake our prophetic heads when we see the lambs frisking about us, and think of mutton.

This triumphant sense of life has different degrees of duration, according to varieties in moral and constitutional temperament; it may give way, before its natural period, to the shocks of accident; sometimes it is prolonged almost to that term which we call our years of discretion; and sometimes it bursts out in brief transports through the gloom and the cares of perfect reason and melancholy maturity. Once in a way, in a spring morning, perhaps, a gentleman of sober habits feels himself, on the first taste of the air, very unaccountably disposed.—If he be in the country, he falls incontinently to rolling in the grass, or takes to kicking his heels, or tries a short run with a jump at the end of it, with other caprices of motion, which have nothing at all to do with getting on, and for which, very likely, he heartily despises himself. He is soon relieved. His

habitual feelings, and numberless little circumstances of his daily experience, are at hand to quell his romping vivacity at a moment's notice. He feels a twinge of the rheumatism, or recollects a bad bargain,—and we see no more of his jumps.

For my part, whenever a fit of this sort of coltishness comes upon me, I not only indulge in it without remorse, but encourage it by all the means in my power. Oh! for the secret of commanding such a spirit at all times! the noble art of going through life with a hop and a skip! How grievous it is that we cannot always be boys; that we cannot grow from three feet to six, without an absolute change of nature! Lady Mary Wortley observes, with her usual liveliness, "It is a maxim with me, to be young as long as one can. There is nothing can pay one for that valuable ignorance which is the companion of youth; those sanguine, groundless hopes, and that lively vanity, which make up all the happiness of life.—To my extreme mortification, I find myself growing wiser and wiser every day." "'Tis folly to be wise," is not a mere conceit. But we can't help it. The most limited experience of life is sufficient to dispel the charming illusions of ignorance.—Every day, from the hour of our birth,

takes from us some happy error, never to return. The fugitive enchantments of our swaddling-clothes are superseded by the frail wonders of short coats; these again we are soon taught to despise; and so, as we live, we are reasoned or ridiculed out of all our jocund mistakes, till the full-grown man sees things as they are, and is just wise enough to be miserable. Ah! la Jack-a-lantern! At this hour of my sad maturity, I remember the throb of heart with which I used to welcome this metaphysical stranger; how I chuckled and crowed, as my dazzled eye followed him through the changeful figures of his fantastical harlequinade.—What it was, or how it came, it never occurred to me to inquire; it was regarded simply as one of the delicious accidents of life, sent on purpose to puzzle and to please. Soon, however, a tender instructor broke in upon my senseless delight, and explained to me the cause of the phenomenon. From that moment the sprightly meteor danced and gamboled unheeded over my head.—Who remembers, without regret, the extinction of his thrilling belief on the subject of that grim couple in Guildhall, Gog and Magog? "And do they really come down?" Why ride in a coach, when one is no longer convinced that the houses are

running away after one another on each side of us? Who cares for Punch when he is nearly certain that he is not alive? and what do we go to a play for, after the time when we turned to mamma to beg her not to let the man stab the lady? And then the Man in the moon!—not to mention the precision with which you absolutely made out his face! Can we forget that such things were, and can we forgive ourselves that they cease to be?

But if we regret the changes which time and knowledge produce in the sights and sounds of the physical world as they affect our young fancies, how much more may we grieve for those which they establish in our moral attributes, our passions, affections, loves, and aversions! What a cost of honest nature goes to make up a gentleman! Talk of teaching dogs to dance—what is it, compared with the barbarity necessary to make a man, in the common sense of the term, polite? There is a politeness, the gift of nature; but it has many awkwardnesses and simplicities of feeling, gesture, and carriage, which must be removed or refined before it will pass current in the commerce of genteel life. See the poor biped turning out his toes in the stocks; see him under the slow torture of elaborating a

bow, and then trace him through all the heart-aches of his moral drilling, that system of disguising, cramping, twisting, and pinching, by which, inside and out, body and soul——Lord help us! what have we done to deserve all this?

The school-boy looks forward with rapture to the time when, says he, "I shall be my own master." Idle anticipation! His first essay, perhaps, as a free agent, is in the critical business of love; his young heart burning for the realities of that tender passion which he has doted on in the creations of poetry and romance. He is informed, however, that he must not love Miss Brown, for whom he is really dying, because she is only beautiful and amiable—he must learn, nevertheless, he is told, to love the ugly Miss Jones, because she is rich, with the same sort of respect for his natural predilections as was shown when he was formerly taught to swallow rhubarb without making faces, like a man. He has a sincere friendship for an old crony of his school days, because he admires his talents and honours his principles; but he must learn to give him up, or see him at the risk of being disinherited, because he is wickedly of a family opposite to his father in political interests and opinions. He has a just in-

dignation against a certain patriot who sold his conscience for a place; but he must learn to treat him with respect, because who knows what may happen. He is disposed to be on very easy terms with an agreeable foreigner who falls in his way; but he must learn to be shy and distant, because nobody knows him: while he must go premeditatedly to dine with Mr. Crump, notorious only for his dulness, because, in fact, he lives at the next door but one, and is an old acquaintance. He plays at whist, which he abhors, lest Mrs. Screw should be out of humour; drinks wine, which always makes him ill, because he is asked; goes to bed, when he is not sleepy, because it is eleven o'clock; and gets up, when dying for more sleep, because it is time to rise; sits shivering with cold, because it is June; faints for want of food, because dinner is not ready; or eats without hunger, because it is ready; sees visitors who only annoy him, because they call; and then annoys himself and them, because he must return their visit; goes out when he would rather be within, because his horse is at the door; and stays at home when he is longing to be abroad, because it is only noon, and nobody goes out till two. And this is being his own master.

No pity for simple nature, straight-forward will, and comfortable ignorance. Learn—learn—is the cry,—till we give up all we love, and bear all we hate. While yet untaught and unpractised, how eager are we to trust all that smile upon us; to give all we can to all that want; to love and to hate as the heart directs; to speak what we think, and all we think; to despise all that is despicable; to cherish those that have served us; to love our country for its own sake; and to love religion for God's sake! But alas! what sad havoc do instruction and fashion make with these native impulses and fresh desires! Confidence must learn to look about her; charity, to listen to reason and to self; love, how to keep a house over its head; hate, not to make faces; sincerity, to hold its tongue; scorn, to be polite; gratitude, to forget; patriotism, to get a place; and religion, to be a bishop.

"Men are but children of a larger growth," might be a high compliment to human nature—but, unfortunately, it is not true. If old age could be regarded only as a condition of ripe infancy, it would be full of attraction and endearment; but, stamped with the impress of the world, with all its tricks, its shuffling wisdom and callous experience, it no more resembles the open soul of childhood, than a sallow

and wrinkled skin resembles the smoothness, and softness, and bloom of its smiling face. Once in a century, indeed, one meets a man who may seem to make out the vision of the poet—one who has borne the shock of conflicting interests and passions, untaught, or at least unchanged; who has pushed his way through the crowd of this villanous world, and yet, in every respect of moral simplicity, still wears his bib and tucker and eats with a spoon. Such a person makes but a bad figure "on Change," and would be out of all decent costume at court. He is much too young for the law, and not quite old enough for the church. It is not impossible that you might find him among the curates; but never think of looking for him in a wig. I have known one individual of this description, and only one; a joyous baby of threescore, with whom I once went a bird-nesting in company with his grand-children. It was in a spring morning, early, when the dew still sparkled on the grass, and all nature was an image of youth and freshness. The grey head of my companion might be considered a little out of season; but his cheerful eye, his lively talk, and ready laugh, were in perfect keeping with the general scene. Time had set his mark upon him; but, like an old

thorn, he blossomed to the last. Age had stiffened his joints, and hardened his sinews; but his affections were still full of spring and flexibility. He could not exactly play at leap-frog; but he could still stand and look on with wonderful agility. I would not have these considered as the happiest instances of his childishness. The simpleton, after sixty winters, was still warm-hearted and disinterested; had still faith in the natural kindliness of man; and an immoveable conviction, that to do good was to be happy, and to be happy, the end of his living. He was not ignorant of the use and the power of money; but somehow or other, it was seldom connected in his mind with any more dignified associations than bull's-eyes and sugar-balls; and he never could be brought to admit, by any force of calculation, that it was a component part of love and friendship. He had many other peculiarities, which he cherished with a reference to his own feelings, rather than the opinion of the world. He had a shocking habit of laughing at grave faces, and at all sorts of gravities not founded in sincerity. He could look sad, and be sad, at a tale of distress, and had a laugh always ripe for a joke, or even the intention of one; but the artifices of affectation, mere physiognomical solem-

nity, or a smile discovering more teeth than pleasantry, excited in him no kind of emotion. His sister, who, in relation to him, was altogether of the Antipodes, was perpetually oppressing him with the remark,—"Brother, you ought to know better." But, poor man, he never improved—like all children, he was very impatient of leading-strings, and would be running alone though he got many a bump on the head for his pains. He died, I grieve to say, a martyr to a game at nine-pins.

Such characters, according to my observation, are among the rarest in the motley crowd of mankind. An "old buck," and an "old boy," are common phrases; but they apply rather to a system of blood and juices, than to any moral distinctions. *A fine "old boy,"* is one somewhat shrunk, perhaps, in the legs, and a little protuberant in the belly, but active withal—who wears buckskins—is carnivorous, —no flincher from the bottle, and can walk up stairs without touching the banisters. I by no means wish to undervalue the merits of such a person. It is said of him, "that he wears surprisingly well," as one says of a pair of boots; and that, let me tell you, is something. The "*old boy*," however, whom I desiderate, is quite of another de-

scription; he would answer better, perhaps, to the world's denomination of an *old fool;* one whom a knave might cheat, or a hypocrite over-reach, somewhat more easily than they could practise upon other people; and with whom they might have gained all their ends, fairly and openly, by trusting to that benevolence which was as little able to deny as to suspect. The Vicar of Wakefield, when he suffered himself in his wisdom and experience to be cheated out of his horse by the cosmogony man, was certainly an old fool. His son Moses, had the excuse of youth, and the fatalism of his thunder-and-lightning great coat—but the great Monogamist—what shall we say for him? This same vicar, indeed, is a delicious example, in all respects, of the kind of old boy so much the object of my love and respect; and as I have mentioned him, I will leave the associations inseparable from his name to perfect and embellish for me the character that I have been aiming to illustrate.

ON THE DIVERSITY OF OPINIONS WITH REGARD TO LIKENESSES IN PORTRAITS.

When a portrait-painter has once advanced to the merit or fortune of being fashionable, his labours are smooth and pleasant enough. He paints with a name, and is admired by law. The question with his patrons is not, a head of an acquaintance, or a whole-length of a friend; but a portrait by Mr. Varnish. He looks his *sitters* in the face with confidence, neither confounded by beauty, nor intimidated by ugliness. He commits to canvas the exact pig's-head of a certain nobleman without offence, and copies out the eyes of the lovely countess as much to her satisfaction as her glass. "Who is that?" you ask—pointing to the head of a man, or a woman, or a child. "That is Mr. Varnish," you hear, and there can be no further question.

It is a very different sort of business, however,

with the less favoured professors of the art, with those who are required to make likenesses as well as portraits. To transcribe literally the most impracticable countenances, to fulfil the expectations of fastidious beauty, to pacify the alarms of captious ugliness, to satisfy the partialities of blind or microscopic affection, and finally, to conciliate unanimity among the most obstinate elements of disagreement, are tasks requiring no common degree of skill, fortitude, and patience. There is no subject, perhaps, on which opinion runs into more unreasonable variations and caprices, than on this of likenesses in portraits; a fact which is the more extraordinary, seeing that the matter is referable to definite rules and certain grounds of comparison. We may allow people to differ as they please, whether Miss Juliet is as handsome as her cousin, or whether blue eyes are more beautiful than black. These are points, interesting as they may be, of mere taste and fancy, not to be controlled by any law, test, or measure. But the infinity of the Alderman's mouth, and the bulk and bearings of his nose, are questions of geometry, determinable with as much precision as the width of the Thames, or the prominence of Beachy Head. Nevertheless, commit these objects

to paper in their just proportions—ay, even to an inch, and you shall find not two of his acquaintance agree to recognise in them their friend the Alderman.

The fact is, that eyes, nose, and mouth, are among the least important marks from which many persons derive their impressions of certain faces. Strangers, indeed, naturally judge from these great cardinal signs, and they judge alike. Those who know nothing of a man but his face will very readily concur in one verdict on his likeness, if an artist do but tolerable justice to the broad forms and arrangement of his features. Of the fifty thousand people who look upon Mr. Stock, as he walks from his house to the Exchange, there will not probably be three who see any thing in his face but a pair of red eyes, and a strange, lawless mouth, kept open by a sort of tusks instead of teeth. With the multitude, Miss A—— is invariably an elderly gentlewoman, sallow, and squinting a little; while Mr. C—— is, without exception, a plain, black-looking man, with a hook nose. These individuals, however, bear a very different aspect in the estimation of their friends. In several parts of Northamptonshire, Miss A—— is said to be still pretty; and that lady herself, with all her experience, wonders at nothing so much as to

hear people call Mr. C—— plain. In countenances with which we are very familiar, we often perceive a variety of minute and indefinable casts of expression, many hints and shadows of meaning, spirit, or affection, that are hidden from a hasty or indifferent observer. "That is the best part of beauty," says Lord Bacon, "which a picture cannot express,—no, nor a first sight of the life." These deep secrets, these intimacies of the countenance, if I may call them so, have nothing to do with its grosser attributes, as a thing of eyes, nose, and other features—yet, being connected frequently with certain characteristic peculiarities of understanding, temper, and feeling, they are inseparably blended with all our thoughts and knowledge of an individual, and we consider them indispensable in any portrait that assumes to be a just representation of him. Hence spring all the anxieties and perplexities of the unfortunate artist. It is his fate to please nobody, because he fails to seize upon with precision, not the plain elements of which every head is composed, but those mysterious lineaments, and fragile looks, which no one pretends to define or explain, but which all concur in understanding as indescribable "somethings," "nameless what shall we call 'em," "je ne

sçais quoi's," with other loose definitions which, whatever they may be, are certainly not amenable to brush and canvas. He may make a perfect copy of all that he sees, and all that the whole world sees, in a face; and yet meet with nothing but dissatisfaction and abuse on the part of his employer, because he has omitted to notice some unutterable piece of fancy-work, the sign perhaps of a moment, perceptible only by two people on earth, and by them only at chosen periods, probably, when it pleases the gentleman to put on some unimaginable description of smile. He may effect all that in the nature of things he can reasonably contend or hope for, and yet reap nothing but disappointment.—"Yes," a lady will say, "I freely admit all that you contend for—the eyes are like, and the nose, and the mouth, and the chin—I cannot deny it—the hair too, and the shape of the head, are to the life—and yet, altogether, I can—not look at that face, and fancy it my husband."

The artist may derive some comfort in his disgraces, when he remembers, that there is no more unanimity on the subject of living likenesses, than on the essays of his art. The grounds of difference are the same in either case. Every observer is either

blind to what others see, or sees something that escapes their notice. You think that the Admiral is the very picture, in vulgar phrase, of his brother, but, rely upon it, you will find no one else that sees the slightest resemblance between them. You know, and will readily admit, that the faces of the two have in every feature a distinct form and character; but are ignorant, it may be, that their perfect resemblance is made out in your eyes merely by a slight movement of the head in talking, which they have in common, and which nobody but yourself has taken the trouble to make himself familiar with. The human face has often been compared to a book, and, among other resemblances, it is in the same manner liable to be so encumbered with the "*notæ variorum*," so disguised by new readings, and curious analysis, that Nature herself might fail to know her own work, in the representations of her commentators. What an infinite variety of opinions and feelings there is about the face of the beautiful Miss M—— on the part of the crowd that see and adore her. They all agree as to the quality of her complexion, the colour of her eyes, and the shape of her nose and mouth; but, among these palpable glories of her face, each has some secret idol—some pet

enchantment, which his own peculiar eyes have discovered—a something amounting almost to a look, perhaps; an inexpressible kind of half-closing of—not both eyes—and yet not altogether of only one; a segment of some unprecedented sort of smile—particularly on the left side of the mouth; a dropping of the eyebrows—no—not a frown, nor any thing like it; a movement of the chin, observable only when the mouth is neither open nor shut; and other exquisite diversities, which an artist might overlook, but which each proprietor thinks absolutely essential to the perfect loveliness of his mistress. In such a case, what is an unfortunate limner to do? There is some reason in insisting upon the utmost fidelity and nicety of imitation, as far as relates to every thing that you can positively swear to in a face, of a substantive form, however minute, whether of flesh and blood, or bone, or gristle, or horn. I would hold out to the end of time for an eloquent wart, and would as soon give up my life as a favourite mole; but for such phantasies and idealisms as looks or half-looks, and smiles of all descriptions and degrees, no man can equitably be responsible.

The greatest perplexities to which a portrait-painter is exposed, spring, not so much from those

with whom he is principally concerned, as from a crowd of monitors, at once indifferent and officious, who make it a duty to call upon the portraits of their acquaintance, and pass sentence upon them before their suspension. He must produce a likeness, that not only the person most interested shall consider perfect, but which all the friends of that person shall combine to pronounce a full transcript of all the nice whims and delicate pretensions, which they may feel or feign on the subject. He paints a portrait, for example, of a lady's daughter, and is happy to hear the mother admit, that he has done all she could desire. This reward, poor man, is cruelly treacherous and transitory. The lady, in the fulness of her satisfaction, sends all her friends to admire the portrait; each of whom—or how could he be a friend?—points out some distinct defect, but for which the likeness had been complete. However contradictory in their suggestions, the lady attends to them, one by one, with great candour; and day after day, as her difficulties arise, repairs to lay them at the door of the persecuted painter. "I am sorry, sir," so she salutes him, "that I am come to find fault." "Fault! madam," replies the artist—"you may remember that but yesterday,—" "Yes—yes," interposes the lady,

"that's very true—but, upon consideration, I must think there wants a little more colour—though that's not what I mean neither. My daughter has a description of bloom—not what we understand by colour—nor yet pale by any means—*a something* very difficult to explain, or to paint, I dare say, but which Mr. Brown very justly thinks more characteristic of my daughter's style of beauty, than any other property of her face." The artist does something or nothing, and the lady is again satisfied; but only in consideration of having set her heart upon some new objection of equal importance. "Just the thing," she now observes,—"the very tint of nature. Mr. Brown, I am sure, will be quite easy now—the colour is exact—but the eyes, sir, the eyes,—there certainly is *something* wanting there." "Upon my word, madam," says the artist, "I do not perceive the defect." "Nay, now do look again," continues the lady; "I don't want them too brilliant, and I would not for the world have them dull. My daughter, without doubt, has black, sparkling eyes—but at the same time, (with an expression between laughing and weeping) a kind of gay melancholy—you understand me,—a sort of—of—the French now would tell you what I mean in a moment: it is *some-*

thing that one does not often see—and which, Mrs. Smirk assures me, is the thing of all others which makes my daughter's eyes so charming." The artist alters again—and so he goes on, quite in opposition to his own judgment and feeling, the blind drudge of unintelligible criticism, till he has entirely ruined the picture in his own estimation, affronted the lady past all colouring, and made enemies of the whole host of her friends, on a thousand grounds of irreconcileable contradiction.

These are no common hardships, we must allow; yet how provide a remedy? I am at a loss what to propose. In the first instance, an artist might fairly claim that his labours should be subjected to only conceivable principles, and practicable regulations. Further—if in the production of a portrait, he succeed in satisfying one—and one million—he should be considered independent, I think, of an intermediate forty or fifty, the formidable band of friends, all conspiring to differ from him and from each other. Having conciliated the agreement of all cursory observers, and the severer judgment of any single intimate, it may be pronounced of him, that he has completed as perfect and comprehensive a likeness as can be expected from human art—though I by

no means profess to despise those profound and exclusive detections, which induce Mrs. Tomkins and Mr. Simpson to think, as they say, for themselves; that is, to overlook what is plain to all eyes but their own. In spite of general rules, and the clearest definitions, people will indulge in these deviations and caprices; and, whatever partial inconveniences may result from them, they are, upon the whole, very beneficial to the comfort and concord of society. It would be a sad thing if all faces were to be beholden, by all, in the same point of view; if there were no partial versions, by which "lack lustre eyes," wide mouths, and red noses, could be brought together, in the tender relation of lovers, and the useful connexion of husbands and wives. As more than half the world must, conscientiously and in strict law, be accounted ugly, how consoling it is that the pliancy of taste and opinion on this subject can so qualify the most positive institutions—so limit and extenuate the most stubborn facts of the human face, as to supply a ready evasion from this apparent rigour of destiny. The ugliest may take comfort from the persuasion, that in some corner of the kingdom, there is an individual—perhaps more than one—who could not only look at him and forgive him, but

discover something, in all that is most exceptionable and *mal à propos* in his countenance, with power to captivate and endear. Let any one look around at the numerous fond couples of his acquaintance, who are peacefully smiling in each other's faces, in defiance of realities and the common verdict of mankind, and he must acknowledge, that beauty is but a name, and ugliness a chimera. In effect there are no such things. Poetry, and novels and romances, have made a certain combination of auburn hair, blue eyes, Greek noses, and pearl teeth, an indispensable part of the *materiel* of true love; but, in the commerce of the living world, this is all sheer nonsense. Depend upon it that, in spite of arbitrary standards, there is no one so ugly who has not his oglings, his amorous looks, and languishing smiles—and that somebody or other has the heart to relish and return them. Nay, beauty itself chooses ugliness for its mate, without thinking it ugly. Look at Mr. and Mrs. P——. How balsamic is such an union to us that are ugly! I mean not to utter a word in disparagement of beauty—but I see no harm in extending its empire by multiplying its attributes. A man may have a just sense of all that is essentially, and by universal assent, most lovely—and yet, under

some inexplicable illusion, fix his own final choice upon features that no one thinks agreeable but himself. He may make his quotations from twenty established *belles*, drink to the tyranny of all the reigning *toasts*—and then go and surrender up his soul for ever, to a mouth charmingly awry, and teeth divinely not in rows. This is as it should be. By such bye laws as these Nature elicits harmony from the jarring elements of the world; thus, amidst all her seeming inequalities and inconsistencies, by a series of kindly compensations, she assimilates all conditions, and provides means for making every one contented and happy.

ON THE MORAL INFLUENCE OF ETIQUETTE AND PARADE.

Some philosophers and declaimers, disgusted with the vanities of polite society, have concluded that happiness and true dignity can exist only in the savage state. Herein, I think, they are manifestly wrong. There is an intermediate state, surely, between the opposite extremes of barbarism and extravagant refinement, better suited than either of them to the free and right exercise of man's intellectual endowments and natural affections. Man was right, it appears to me, when he betook himself to soap and water; neither is he without a respectable plea for his use of combs; nor can I, in my heart, think much the worse of him, for declining to eat his meat either raw or alive. In his moral conditions too, as well as in his external circumstances, I can make many allowances for his departure from some of the simplicities of Otaheite. His emancipation from thievish

propensities, for instance, may be borne with; and his neglect of the "good old practice" of knocking young children or old persons on the head, when considered troublesome or unnecessary, is, in my opinion, absolutely commendable. These modest improvements are within the verge of the intermediate state that I have mentioned; and no man, perhaps, in clothes and his senses, would deliberately condemn them. If there were no such state, however, and the question of preference lay between a condition purely natural or savage, and the highest degree of what we call refinement—between a wigwam and a palace, the Boshies-men and the *beau monde*—a man might hesitate in his decision, yet not be mad; or might finally turn from kings and their courts, and give his choice to his kindred in the woods, yet not be indifferent to the glories of human intellect, and the charms of human love and kindness.

Coarseness is the besetting sin of uncivilized life—while civilization in its excess degenerates into effeminacy, frivolity, and all the timid vices, headed by their chief, hypocrisy. Now coarseness is by no means incompatible with the highest attributes of mind, and often enters even into the gentlest charities of our nature—not indeed without violence to

the softness of their exterior forms, but without injury to their vital pith and substance. We certainly cannot say this of that combination of feebleness, coldness, and affectation, however set off by polish, which is the peculiar produce of "the best society." The noblest creations of mind in poetry have abounded with extreme coarseness; and it has been questioned, whether this quality, the result of an irresponsible boldness and freedom, be not in some degree inseparable from the highest order of genius. The rules which govern taste, it has been said, frighten invention; they make a man at once decent and dull; lead to a smooth and unerring mediocrity, secure only of not giving offence, and at the same time subdue all that has most power to yield delight. Be this as it may in poetry, it is certain that, in the conduct of life, a studious and exclusive attention to refinement, with its small delicacies and critical punctilios, invariably tends to reduce substance and vigour, to cripple all freedom of action, and stifle all warmth and alacrity of feeling. Asperities are removed—coarseness is softened down; but with the same kind of consequences as attend the labours of certain renovators of old pictures, who, offended by here and there a speck of dirt, set themselves to

scrubbing and scraping with such resolution, that dirt, and colour, and form, yield before them, and a picture finally comes forth from their hands, smooth and clean—and nothing else.

Man, to shelter himself from the cold, put on clothing; and, without stopping to inquire at present how much he may have lost by this measure in power and freedom of bodily action, as he gained something in point of comfort and enjoyment, we will admit that he did well. Having thus satisfied a plain necessity, he begins, under new influences of laziness and leisure, to improve and refine; makes a sort of plaything of his dress; converts it, without the least regard to its original purposes, into a simple subject of experimental decoration; pursues a continual round of unmeaning changes, only because they are changes, not adapting his finery to his body, but forcing his body to be the servant of his finery, turning it into a mere clothes-peg,—a convenient kind of thing made to show off the beauty of red cloth and shining satin. We admire all this, it is true; though it would be difficult to justify ourselves for so doing to good taste—if taste has any connexion with plain sense and common propriety. In the matter of dress, taste would certainly admit

nothing tending to disguise the "fair proportions" of the body, or to obstruct the ease, and grace, and dignity, of its natural movements. We admire fine clothes wherever we see them; but purely on their own account. We look with delight on a procession of the nobility in their state dresses—a mere doting on rich stuffs and gaudy colours—an idle adoration of irrelevant velvet and impertinent feathers. We should admire them in the same spirit were they hung with variegated lamps; or could come to the grace, I have no doubt, with a little discipline, of regarding with a pleasing wonder Knights Grand Crosses, and commanders, rolling and ducking along in the guise of "*Jack in the Green.*" I have heard of a tribe of people in America, or somewhere, who, being rather ill-provided with the ordinary manufactures that supply the magnificence of dress, help out their poverty by borrowing from the more costly and portable part of their household furniture. Among them you shall see a dignitary, on state occasions, covered, under pretence of shirt and coat, with a miscellaneous load of crockery and hardware—glittering and jingling in a musical attire of tea-pots, spoons, warming-pan, and fire-irons. Very pretty all this, I am ready to grant, in a bare

view of ornament. I am maintaining only, that such adventurous niceties are apt to do violence to qualities of far more importance than ornament. We sneer at the naked savage, besmeared with tallow and ochre; and his embellishments are certainly coarse enough, ill-applied, and none of the sweetest: but be it remembered that, simple and greasy as he stands, he can run down a fox at a moment's notice, or swim a river, or scale a precipice; while a Knight Grand Cross, in the full glory of his wardrobe, shall scarcely perchance be able to walk without help.—After all, simplicity is the prime element of all that is truly great and lastingly pleasing. Whatever the proprietors of silk breeches and cocked hats may think of the matter, the naked figure exhibits man in his most striking form of beauty and power. I am not contending that every man out of his clothes is an Apollo: it is enough for my argument if it be admitted, that Apollo in a coat and breeches would at once lose all his dignity and grace.

A scheme of torture, analogous to that applied to dress, is extended by "the first circles" to all their concernments. Their passions and affections, their loves and friendships, are so encumbered with dull rites and irrelevant forms, that they can scarcely live

under the load. They accumulate drapery and figure-work, till substance is quite buried under show, and nothing remains but hollow signs and heartless appearances; till dropping a card at his door is a visit to an acquaintance, and sending an empty coach to his funeral is mourning for a friend. Etiquette is the sovereign controller of conduct,—the sole representative of nature, among certain classes. They cast out the unruly souls that were born with them, banish rebellious reason and pragmatical conscience, and fill themselves with an entirely new order of machinery, quiet, precise, passive—and as true to the Court Calendar as the needle to the pole. The vulgar, or the mass of mankind, have heads and hearts, and will be thrusting themselves forward into all the serious duties and illustrious cares of life; so that nothing connected with the highest aims of reason and invention, or with the noblest or the kindest affections, is left untouched by their vile participation. How then are "the great" to distinguish themselves? What sacred peculiarities can they assume, except certain small modes, superadded to the ordinary ways of doing ordinary things, which the multitude are too full of business and enjoyment to notice or

imitate? Shut out from the animating bustle of common life—its anxious wants and earnest interests, they have no resource against time, and no provision for glory, except that of investing little things with great names; dignifying trifles by magnificent devices, and helping out their shortness and insipidity with circuitous ceremony and intricate parade. Think of the popular process of despatching a pound or two of food into the stomach, to relieve hunger and emptiness, and then turn your attention to the multiplied entanglements—the plot and stratagem, of a grand dinner-party in high life. You and I "jump into" our clothes—"just swallow a mouthful,"—"toss off" a draught—put on our hats and "are off,"—and still find enough to do before we take another jump—into bed: but such brevities of conduct would absolutely annihilate the great for twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four. We talk of the twinkling of an eye—and half a minute—divisions of time which a man of quality has no conception of. His business is delay; his enjoyment, not to be lively in every thing, but to be long.

The worst effect of these forms and superfluities is, that they break down the energies of the mind,

and thoroughly incapacitate a man from acting, in any circumstances, with directness and promptitude. They are not to be cast aside, as an artisan puts off his Sunday clothes, when they might distract his attention and obstruct his labour. Once become endeared and habitual, they cling to a man for ever. Though adapted only to the service of a morning levee or an evening ball, he will be faithful to them under every aspect of fortune. If called upon for despatch by any untried emergency, however critical and perilous, he is called in vain: he must still refer to his little system of regulated movements, and prescribed delays; he has no notion of sudden impulses, and sudden action; he must have his appointed signals, and due *permits*; and, though death should stare him in the face, will provide for his safety only according to law. He loves forms for their own sake; they have been capable, he has found, of giving interest to the smallest occasions, and the greatest occasions cannot induce him to dispense with them. The fatal capture of Louis XVI. at Varennes, was caused, Madame de Staël declares, "by some delays of form and ceremony, without which it was impossible for the king to get into his coach." As for bundling him in at once, and

scampering off with him for his life, as though he had been nothing but a man in his senses, it was not to be thought of. True, the danger was pressing and nothing less than death—but the *Gold Stick!* and the *Silver Stick!* and all the other sticks, bearing or borne, would you think of neglecting them, for a moment, or in any moment?

Cardinal de Retz gives us an account of a charming little interlude of court politics happening in his time, which is strikingly illustrative of the absorbing influence of forms, and the kind of serious and impassioned frivolity that they fix in the mind—a frivolity not to be daunted by the threats and frowns of the most momentous occasions. At a period when the nation was in arms for its best and dearest rights, and the monarchy trembled to its base, the Prince of Condè interceded, with his high authority, to have a stool at court granted to the Countess of Foix, a privilege hitherto enjoyed only by duchesses. Mazarin opposes the measure with his whole soul, and incites all the young noblemen at court to resist, with their lives, all orders of stools that were not granted upon special warrant. The prince seeing this formidable array, headed by the Mareschal de L'Hôpital, thought it prudent to re-

cede; though still not without trying some means of gratifying the pride and jealousy of his friend the countess. As he could not raise her to a stool, the next best mode of establishing an equality, he thought, would be to pull the duchesses down; and accordingly, he proposed that all stools of all privileged houses should be suppressed. The family of Rohan was the first of the number, and would as soon have given up their lives. De Retz now took the alarm, and resolved upon a counter-assembly "for maintaining the stool of the house of Rohan." He used, at the same time, all his personal influence with the Prince of Condè, and prevailed. "I promise you," said that great man, "not to oppose the privilege of the stool, in the house of Rohan." This point established, people could then proceed to consider, whether some measures might not be adopted for saving Paris from massacre and pillage.—De Retz relates his story with the most perfect gravity, being himself not a little infected with the great epidemic of courts, the disease of frivolity and forms. Hurrying one day to mediate between the soldiers and the people, in the heat and peril of a bloody scuffle, he had one of his pages wounded, he informs us, "*who held up his cassock behind.*" Conceive a

man so attended in such a moment! Cardinals, it may be said, always have their train-bearers: and this is precisely what I have been contending for. The great must have their forms, cost what it may; fashion governs them like a fatality, bending to neither time nor circumstance. In their blind obedience, they remind me of a little animal I have read of, called the Lapland Marmot, whose instinct it is, when in motion, to advance invariably straight forwards. Whatever impediments may oppose it, fire or water, this instinct prevails: it can indulge in neither circuit nor "short cut;" if it encounters a well, it plunges into it, and is seen crawling up on the other side; if it is stopped by a hay-stack, it gnaws its way through it; if it meets a boat on the water, it passes over it—in short, it gives way to nothing, and goes round nothing, but keeps boring on in its inflexible line, "through dense and rare," though its life should be the sacrifice of its constancy.

Age and approaching death, one would imagine, might sober even a courtier; force him at last to be in earnest; to put away all solemn trifling and imposture, and prepare for his change in simplicity and truth. The case, however, is otherwise. Decrepitude, with its rigid back, may have its little

tricks; and something in the way of juggle and show may be got up even on a death-bed. As long as there is breath, there may be etiquette—nay, when a man has ceremoniously ceased to exist, his cold and corrupting remains may still go through their course of mummery, under the direction of his surviving and sympathetic friends: he may "lie in state" till he is quite rotten, and then be carried to the grave in the face of day, amidst the palpable woe of a thousand coaches, all respectfully empty, a state horse, and a lid of feathers. Madame du Deffand, on her death-bed, though without an atom of religious feeling in her heart, would on no account go out of the world without the polite custom of a clergyman—making, however, an especial provision against being disturbed by any seriousness of meaning on the occasion. "Monsieur le Curé," said the dying penitent to the priest who attended her, "you will be perfectly satisfied with me, as I shall be with you, if you perplex me with no reasons, questions, or sermons." Montaigne cites a very remarkable instance of death-bed foolery. Speaking of the insignificance of death in certain minds, he mentions a great man, who spent his last hours in arranging the honours of his own funeral. Having earnestly so-

licited the attendance of his friends of rank and wealth, and settled with minute exactness the whole method and order of this his final show, he seemed quite at ease, and died content. "I have seldom heard," adds Montaigne, "of so long-lived a vanity."

On such a system of refinement as this, the great, that is, the very great, found their claims to superiority over the bulk of mankind—the vulgar, the people, the rabble, or any other contemptuous collective you please, that shall designate the active, thinking, feeling crowd, whose pitiful lot it is to fill up their time with useful industry, or natural enjoyments. He is the first in rank who is least independent of rules and ceremonies. The Court Calendar, that unanswerable distributor of degrees, so determines, and there can be no doubt of it. A peer is greater than a baronet, a duke is greater than a peer, and a king takes precedence of all. Greater than a king!—Inconceivable! A Welsh bishop made an apology to James I. for preferring God—to his Majesty. The question of precedence was delicate, but the Deity, it was believed, in the phrase of the court, had the *pas*.

Contemplating enormities like these, one is disposed almost to justify Rousseau, or any man, in

abhorring the very name of civilization, and, in a paroxysm of overpowering disgust, might exclaim, —"Send us to our caves again—strip us to the wind, and rain, and sun; give us our gross loves—our fierce hatred—our bloody revenge;—any thing, if it be but nature." Such a burst over, we soon take heart again, and perceive that there is no pressing necessity for adopting so tremendous a remedy. Etiquette, in its mawkish mixture of stateliness and imbecility, though the exclusive currency of the "first society," does not certainly represent human nature in an attractive dress. But civilization is not responsible for its abominations, and she can point to millions upon millions of useful, intelligent, and happy creatures of her work, to refute such a scandal.

We may remember too for our comfort, that even in the class which, by right of station, is most chargeable with the sins of vanity and affectation, there are numberless illustrious examples, with whom high rank is but subsidiary to all that can exalt and adorn human nature. The mere puppets of etiquette are, in this country at least, in a minority, even at court. The capability of folly is pretty equally distributed among all classes: we can only say, that it is most

likely to meet with dangerous encouragement among those who are farthest removed from the restraints of wholesome labour, and the sobering cares of common life. A man who has his bread to get, has no time to make himself *very* ridiculous.

OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS, AND "MR. MARTIN'S ACT."

THERE can scarcely be two opinions about the feeling with which cruelty of every description should be regarded. It may be difficult to bring people to one judgment as to what constitutes cruelty: some will stop at blood, while others will go as far as bones; but there is a degree of the crime which all will agree to look upon with unqualified abhorrence; conceding to it no palliation on any account—none resulting from the power and dignity of the brute that inflicts it; and none, undoubtedly, from the meanness or helplessness of the object on whom it is exercised. Our poor fellow-creatures on all fours, if they had no claims to our active care and kindness from their manifold services in our behalf, have, from their mere community with us in the great inheritance of flesh and blood and sense of pain, an undeniable title to our mercy and forbearance. In

the relation between man and horse, custom, and a sort of convenience, have determined, that the former should be the rider: but, notwithstanding this enormous distinction, there are still such affinities between the two, as should relieve him who is undermost from the positive contempt of his superior, or at least protect him from all superfluous tyranny and torture. In few words, because a forked creature, in a coat and hat, conceives himself made on purpose to sit astride an animal with four legs and a tail, it does not therefore follow that he has a clear right to maltreat it, in wantonness either of sport or rage. There seems to be no very decisive objection, on the part of the horse, to the man's first fancy: he may ride and, for aught I know, be innocent: but the testimony of his own flesh will assure him, that to lash a horse to the bare bones is an act of inhuman iniquity.

Nothing then but praise is due to the motives, at least, of the individual, to whose exertions we owe the late *Act* for the prevention or punishment of cruelty. He has employed no common pains in the business; not resting content with the bare triumph of his *Act*, but taking upon himself the quite extra-senatorial task of seeing it enforced—of hunting up

game, as it were, in the high-ways, on which to try the effect of his new machinery. Offices so very practical are rather a novelty in parliamentary life, if I am not a careless observer. Any man might have borne the toil of talking the new Act through the House of Commons: but Mr. Martin, when he had done this, had not done half his work. With him, the noise of St. Stephen's is but as a proem to the noise of Smithfield: he escapes from the confusion of the benches, only to launch into the uproar of the pens. "The honourable gentleman opposite," and "the worthy member on the left," are but a joke at the top of their voices: the music of market-day in Smithfield is a far more serious matter. To appear in that brute-Babel, and no more, is heroism, in a familiar way:—what then shall we say of a Member of Parliament, who ventures there for the express purpose of catching a drover?

To be quite serious, such a way of going to work shows hearty intentions, to say the least of it. The wisdom of such measures, and their efficacy, in reference to either offending man or suffering brute, are, I think, exceedingly questionable. With a thorough detestation of cruelty, I cannot regard it, in this case, as a fit subject for legislation. There

can be no pity for the cowardly ruffian who considers the helpless dependence of animals as a motive only for abusing them; yet I cannot see how, on this account, he can be fairly made amenable to penal law. I would cheerfully see him punished; though certainly not by means of any special provision, offensive to the general principles of liberty.—Every man has a right, in popular phrase, to do what he pleases with his own property; and such a right being admitted, with what consistency can we subject him to penalties, for beating his horse, his ox, or his dog—a kind of living chattels, which universal custom recognises to be as much his pure, passive property, as his tables and chairs? I can at once understand the fitness of making an individual accountable to public justice for ill-using his neighbour's horse, or beast of any kind; but to seize upon him as a criminal, and reduce him to beggary, or throw him into a prison, for any severities that he pleases to inflict upon a beast of his own, appears to me to be an act of arbitrary oppression, entirely at variance with all the analogies of English law. Moral justice cannot always be made a ground for legislative enactments. We check the free-agency of pick-pockets and house-breakers, with the consent

of all the world: but crimes of a far deeper dye, in a moral point of view, must be permitted to go unpunished, at least in a legal sense, if they do not come within a certain line, which the usage of ages has assigned as the limit of legal authority. All the finer parts of morality are not within the jurisdiction of the courts. Many a gentleman must be allowed to go at large, for whom the stocks would be a very inadequate reward. One may indulge in a pious wish concerning such a person—but no more.

If a man, by an act of unmeasured severity to a horse, were not less an offender against the general feeling and practice of the world than against abstract justice, I should still not think that there was a case made out for the interference of the legislature. But in truth he is no trangressor against the public in any sense. He acts in no worse spirit than others do towards animals in their power: he is encouraged in his ferocity by general example; he sees all men combining to make their horses as useful as possible—all, high and low, agreeing in a callous assumption of their extreme services, with just so much respect, in return, for their comforts and enjoyments, as is consistent with the selfish in-

terest which they have in their preservation. This is a harsh description of a civilized people—yet, is it not a true one? If there is a hearty wish abroad to abolish cruelty, let us have no cant; let us not set to work with any suspicious timidity, but probe the question to the very bottom.

Do I mean then to say, that no man would hesitate to beat his horse without mercy?—No—certainly not. I do say, however, that thousands, who might shrink from an act of immediate violence—who might scruple to tear flesh or draw blood—do, nevertheless, adopt, encourage, or connive at, a treatment of horses, compared with which, as a cause of deep and lasting suffering to those animals, the utmost powers of the lash are but as a fly-bite. Here and there a fellow may be found brutal enough to lash a horse till the blood flows; and by such acts, one horse, probably, in one hundred, is subject, from time to time, to a momentary pain: while all men remorselessly avail themselves of the convenience of post-chaises and stage-coaches, the conduct of which sends ninety horses out of a hundred, through a lingering course of torturing disease, to a premature death. Is cruelty, as far as it is a matter interesting to horses, chargeable only to the

first-mentioned description of offenders? A carman, in a ragged coat and dirty shirt, strikes his fore-horse on the nose with the butt-end of his whip, and the animal feels the smart for a full hour and a half; while a sporting gentleman, of the first fashion from top to toe, mounts his "*favourite* mare," and goads it on to the performance of some desperate match against time—its agonizing exertions either killing it on the spot, or inflicting upon it some dire disease in the lungs, or heart, or limbs, to last as long as its life. If either of these two delinquents is a fit mark for punishment, which should have the preference?—Speak out—don't be thinking about the coats of the parties—the carman strikes in mere passion; the gentleman has five hundred pounds depending on his match! If cruelty can admit of an excuse, who, if he has any warmer feeling about him than a Jew-pedlar, will deny, that the carman has the best to propose?

It is this view of the case that gives me a peculiar distaste for the spirit of *Mr. Martin's Act*. It dispenses punishment with no equal justice. I would have no legislation at all in any such matters, and certainly not such legislation as this. We see its penalties visited only upon those who have rags and

dirt against them, with want of education, and other circumstances of their condition, which should plead in their favour; while it spares others, who have no better claim to exemption than what they derive from better dress, together with more knowledge, and more refinement, which should be regarded only as an aggravation of their wrong-doing. It is really quite absurd to see a man hunting out for cruel people who abuse horses, yet fixing his sole attention upon Smithfield drovers and Hackney-coachmen; as if there were no carriages likely to present game of this sort, except those with numbers upon them. Make drovers and hackney-coachmen as tender-hearted as you please; but the object desired is relief for horses—the race—and such a plan as this, in relation to such an object, is as a drop to the ocean. The cruelty, I contend, is general. Whatever might be the docility of the horse, under a system of gentle instruction, custom has decided, that he shall be controlled by means of violence and coercion; and I have no doubt that a majority of the senators, who, in their wisdom and tenderness, passed the late act against cruelty, deliberated with whips in their hands and spurs at their heels. That such instruments, in the power of passionate or

thoughtless men, of all ranks, will often be employed for objects very remote from the simple management of a horse, there can be no doubt. And where is the remedy? The exercise of these weapons is indulged in universally with such indefinite freedom, that if law would oppose it with effect, or on any principle of equal dealing, it must be by one sweeping blow, levelled at all who ride or drive. The attempt to assign punishment to certain degrees or certain persons, in a species of offence so indeterminate and widely spread, must infallibly be attended with endless perplexity, and intolerable partiality.

All outrageous violence towards animals, not countenanced by common custom, must be delivered over for punishment, it appears to me, to nothing but the scorn arising from public feeling and opinion. Such a check may be feeble and rarely interposed, and it is very disgraceful that it should be so; but being so, it is perfectly futile to think of aiding and quickening it by Acts of Parliament. Law follows, not leads, the course of public opinion. I have no notion of indicting a whole kingdom into gentleness, or of softening the national mind by the rough agency of the police. We must wait for the developement of other and surer sources of improve-

ment. We may wait long, but we must wait patiently. Cruelty is not quite discarded, if all be true that we hear of, between man and man; how long it may be, before there shall be nothing but kindness between man and horse—Heaven knows.

If it be thought, that such a consummation can be advanced by the direct violence of law, in the name of sincerity and fair play, let it be dealt impartially, and in earnest. Decree at once, that fine and imprisonment shall be the reward of every man, without distinction, who gives unnecessary pain to any thing that lives. If the carman's whip is to be actionable, why spare the spurs of "the nobility, gentry, and others," pieces of studied and prepense cruelty, on the very face of them? We shall hear, perhaps, of "necessary cruelty,"—or some such sophistication, in defence of abuses sanctified by general use, or high authority. As if cruelty were only culpable, when prompted by thoughtless rage—or were justified, when applied deliberately, in the holy pursuit of profit and amusement. To lash a horse in a coal-cart is a crime; to lash him on a race-ground is only——— the way to make him win. What right have we, I should wish to know, to punish hackney-coachmen for "cruelty to animals,"

while we pass by certain gentlemen in red coats, who, on any given morning, will mount their horses, and ride them, it may be, till they drop from exhaustion, that they may keep close to a pack of ravenous dogs, set on by them, first, to terrify, through an hour or two of agony, and then to destroy, a poor defenceless hare. Nay, hunting is a most agreeable and enlivening exercise! I know it, but we are talking about cruelty to animals, and the propriety of legislating on such a subject. Bull-baiting is illegal, I believe, or subject, in some way, to mayors or constables; but who can be blind to the striking difference, in point of cruelty, between baiting a bull and baiting a hare? Besides, consider the sorts of company that usually attend the sport of bull-baiting.

Is mere wantonness of cruelty to be the ground of punishment? Why then leave untaxed the barbarous and senseless practice of cutting off the tails of horses—in losing which they are exposed to more pain than they would derive from whips, if every body used them like those who use them most? They are in the way—I have heard people say; in their way, they mean, I suppose, if they have a meaning. Why do we permit a man to go at large

who cuts off his terrier's ears, when he shall not propose any better excuse for such an aggression than, that "somehow or other, he never thinks a terrier looks like a terrier with long ears?" How comes it that the alderman is not called upon, to atone for ages of crimped cod? But stay—this particular may escape, probably, under the head of "necessary cruelties." If a man is to be brought to account for injuring a horse, why allow him to torture a mouse or maltreat a fly with impunity? These animals are so insignificant, it may be said, mere vermin; and what if they are so? the question is not of dignity or usefulness, but of cruelty—and "the poor beetle that we tread upon—in corporal sufferance—"

I have been led to say rather more on this part of my subject than I had intended. I find myself defending the cause of man, when I had simply proposed to myself to become the advocate of brutes. My chief objection, after all, to *Mr. Martin's Act* is, not that it is unjust and unequal in its dispensation of punishment (a blot, however, that I by no means make light of), but that it does not afford a shadow of relief to the poor animals which it professes to befriend. Among all their sufferings, it

singles out for redress the very lightest, and that which is least accessible to control and correction. In reference to the whole race of horses, mere wanton or savage abuse must be an injury of very rare occurrence; and were they relieved from all the other modes of oppression under which they groan, their liability to this single casualty would still be the same. Acts of deliberate cruelty might be made, perhaps, to yield to the terrors of law; the same power that has limited the number of passengers to be carried in and on a coach, for the security of the human traveller, might interpose to regulate the length of stages, for the comfort of horses; but to suppose that the passion of anger is to be banished by Act of Parliament, or that such an authority shall prevent an intemperate man from now and then beating his horse, or any thing else that falls in his way, is perfectly absurd. Men will not deal better by their horses than they do by their wives: they will beat them occasionally; and to direct a powerless blow, under pretence of relief, at this partial grievance, while all their great, general, and constant injuries remain unredressed, is nothing but mockery. What would the ladies say, if they were dependent for all their rights in society on positive

law, which should make no other provision in their favour, than that their husbands should not beat them. A man, it might be enacted, may exert any decent sovereignty over his wife, or turn her to any useful account, lock her up in perpetual confinement, or keep her to hard labour during all her waking hours, that she may relieve him from the pain of tilling the ground, and hewing wood, and carrying water; but he shall not lay a finger upon her in the way of chastisement. Work her to death and welcome—but let him touch a hair of her head in anger at his peril. Thank God, the women have a better security for the consideration that is their due, in the general gallantry and polish of the age. Cherished, admired, respected, they would never think of complaining, as a body, that here and there a man had come to the enormity of beating his wife. Such a matter is grievous enough, to be sure, as it falls upon Mrs. B——, or Mrs. C——, but is no concern for the sex.

If our poor horses, in like manner, could but secure a little uniform moderation in their general treatment; if they could put away that single but woful curse of their kind, over-work, they would have fair reason to be content, and might well de-

spise the small annoyances and chance-blows coincident with irritable coachmen and impatient riders. The lash is the least of their sufferings. Relieve them from excessive labour, and the train of misery connected with it, and you will have done for them all that the most sanguine humanity could hope for or desire. Could they speak, they would, I have no doubt, check our vanity by telling us, that they laugh at the puny violences that can come from the mere muscles of a man. What are these compared with the kicks which it sometimes pleases them to exchange with one another? What is a hand to an animal with a hoof? They care not, they would say, for the whip, on its own account, however lawlessly applied; they complain only of the decorous and measured use of it, as a means of urging them on to exertions beyond their strength, and fatal to their health. Observe a team of horses in an inn-yard, just liberated from a stage-coach—smoking and drenched with sweat, their heads sunk, panting, and painfully blowing out their breath, their knees bent and stiffened, their tails quivering, every muscle in their bodies trembling with agitation; see them in this state limping and staggering into their stable, that they may take such rest as their aching

bones will allow them, and recover so much strength as will fit them to be worked and worn down again. What comfort would these wretched animals receive, in the depth of their misery, could you make them understand that *Mr. Martin's* eye was upon them, and that the ferocious driver, who whipped his near leader for a minute and a half, on a certain Wednesday, would surely be brought to punishment? Don't insult us, they might say, with your niggardly sympathy—don't talk to us of cruel drivers—protect us from cruel proprietors, and cruel travellers. You are brushing gnats from our hides, when we have wounds at our hearts.

The proprietors of post-horses have determined by cold calculation, that the most profitable way of dealing with them is "*to get as much work out of them*" as possible, by the speediest means; that a horse is turned to more account, when worked to death in two years, than he would be by a longer life of more moderate exertion. With this truth before them, they suffer no anxiety about the feelings of the animals to puzzle their arithmetic; regarding them only as abstract quantities—so much horse-power—not so much horse-flesh. Could the legislature interfere with safety, or any chance of

success, to repress such cruelties as these? Would it be borne, that the law should presume to settle for every man the task-work of his horse; to tax journeys, in addition to turnpikes, with penalties on excessive galloping, and immoderate duration? Would any such regulations be submitted to for a moment; affecting, as they would, not only proprietors of post-horses, but travellers of all denominations, from the noble spirits who have nothing to do but to rattle in and out of the metropolis, as if life and death were on their speed, to the humble itinerant, who must curse, and swear, and whip over his way, as best he may, that his "*sand O*" may be in time for the market? They clearly would not. Though such interference might at once secure horses from all their oppression, it must not be employed; because, however excellent in its particular spirit and effect, it would be an infraction of general rules connected with the whole body of our rights and privileges. If, then, so large a benefit to all horse-kind must yield to these general rules, why break them for so insignificant an object as that of saving a few individuals from the least oppressive among the multitude of abuses to which they are exposed? Why arrest the horse-whipping driver on the outside of a carriage, while you hesitate to

check the horse-killing gentleman in the inside? I verily suspect, that the difference between outside and inside, between jacket and coat, is the best excuse that can be assigned for so plain a contradiction.

It is often, and unjustly, required from a person who finds fault with any scheme of improvement, that he should suggest a better, or be silent; as if the simple detection of error were little other than a crime. Objecting, as I do, to *Mr. Martin's Act*, as oppressive, partial, and useless, what profound plan, it may be asked, would I propose, as likely to operate in its place more equitably, and with greater effect? In this ripe age of civilization, I have no great expectations, I confess, that any very sudden discoveries will be made, for the further advancement of justice and gentleness among men. If we sin now, it is not in ignorance. Public opinion and common custom, I have said, seem to me to be the only rightful restraint, beyond every man's own conscience, for the species of cruelty that I have been treating of; and if these great authorities are more disposed in this case, as I conceive they are, to encourage than repress the abuse, who has the best and readiest means of bringing them to a more decent sense of their duty? I should not address

myself to the obscure ruffians who have hitherto been the only victims of *Mr. Martin's Act*. You may fine, and imprison, and terrify a carman for beating his horse, and produce no other effect upon public feeling, but that of diverting its sympathy from the proper object, and fixing it upon the least deserving brute of the two. I should appeal rather to the high and mighty, to those who, from eminence of station, are most within the view of the world, and whose example is most influential upon general conduct. I beg to repeat, however it may startle those who have had their fine horrors of drovers and monsters with cart-whips, that we are all cruel alike: we all give our countenance and co-operation to the maltreatment of horses; and if there is an honest design of protecting them by punishing their oppressors, let not the penalty be wasted on the lowest, but fall where it is alone likely to bring forth good fruits, upon the highest. The rich, who make most use of horses, are beyond question the great cause of all their serious and lasting pains. Let them concur in adopting a more considerate and merciful treatment of them, and *Mr. Martin's Act* may be permitted to retire. Look at the style of travelling in this country, not among carts and

waggons,—but among post-chaises and gentlemen's carriages! Let those who have a silly pleasure, or sillier pride, in scampering desperately along the roads, for the passing glory of raising a little wonder and dust, reflect upon the consequences of these dazzling deeds to the poor animals who bear a painful and unwilling part in them. So far is cruelty from being the exclusive vice of the poor, that, of any given party of dashing travellers, you shall find the driver, the unsanctified post-boy, the only one who has the slightest tenderness for the horses; and it is well if he can maintain this feeling against the persuasion, threats, and bribery of his betters. "Push on, my lad, push on, we'll remember you," is dinned in his ears till, it is too probable, his frailty yields, and, "to please the gentlemen," he turns savage at last. Let the impatient spirits who are in the habit of poking their heads out of the front windows of chaises, and crying out, "Push on," substitute for such harsh phrases the more kindly injunction of "Gently, my lad, gently," and they will do incalculably more, they may assure themselves, for the relief of horses, than they who go about to denounce the unlicensed cruelty of the vulgar.

I am not at all confident, that these recommendations, were they likely to be heard, would be listened to with much respect. People are not cruel for cruelty's sake; but they will not readily give up the least of their enjoyments, if they can be reproached with nothing but cruelty. They have no delight in giving pain; but they will cling with obstinacy even to trifles that are pleasurable to themselves, and painful only to others. How can one expect that the world will give up any of its habitual indulgences in favour of brutes that perish, when he remembers the history of the slave trade—how long it was before we could be driven from a few paltry gains and base advantages, that devoted millions of human beings to the extremity of human misery and degradation? With such a precedent in memory, with what face could he propose, in these hard times too, that the profits of any man should suffer the reduction of a farthing, that horses might not die of the glanders,—now that farmers are obliged to give the labour of two horses to one?

But I have said enough. The time *may* come, when these miserable entanglements and difficulties, that stand in the way of universal beneficence, shall

be removed. Enough *has* been done to keep hope alive: it is not quite absurd, while it is certainly very pleasing, to imagine some Utopian futurity, when man, and the meanest creature that lives, shall have their full rights and enjoyments.

OF EXAGGERATION AND MATTER-OF-FACT PEOPLE.

THE truth should be spoken undoubtedly, and always spoken—that is, when we do speak. Silence may be a lie, under circumstances; but ordinary moralists will scarcely think it cognizable under the head of "telling lies." Not to perplex myself with fine distinctions, how few there are of those who open their mouths, that, with any kind of certainty and constancy, speak the pure truth. I have nothing to say just now of grave and pondered lies of the devil's colour; I advert only to that general laxity and ineptitude of expression in familiar discourse or description, which, with no great dishonesty of meaning, do violence in various degrees to things as they are, and are known to be. Exaggeration strikes one in a moment as the most common among colloquial misdemeanors, though, providing it at once come from the heart, and have some "method

in it," I think it by no means unpleasant, nor, with all its boldness, so apt to mislead as many figures of a more cold and balancing character. If a man give me the right spirit of things, I can allow him a little harmless licentiousness in piling up of quantities. If he do not distort and disguise, he may magnify, and will not deceive or offend me. Let him not confound black with white, and I will not quarrel with him about *very* black, and *very* white. I should stipulate literally and formally for the "true stuff;" but, secure of this, a man may intensify it as he pleases: I understand him; I know his ardent ways and liberal measures, and can at any time dilute him down to proof.

There is an inborn tendency in the human mind (where there is mind) to amplification—to swell out beyond the limits of nature and truth. Our souls are too big for our bodies, and our perceptions and impressions pitched too high for the scale and circumstances of the physical world in which we live. Our middle-size belies us: we are all Patagonians in our hearts and our tongues—little creatures with our fifteen hundred steps to a mile, who nevertheless find this earth, with its spare deserts and untrodden forests, too circumscribed for our free

elbow-room. Our language, our descriptive phrases, however they may be tamed down in signification by common use, have been framed as for a race of giants in a giant world. The more moderate among us, in describing the wonders of a gale of wind at sea, would scarcely be so narrow-minded as to talk of waves rising thirty or forty feet, instead of "mountains high." How should you credit that a man could be wet through two coats, unless he asseverated that it rained "as if heaven and earth were coming together," at the least? "When the louse feeds," says Buffon, "the blood is seen *to rush like a torrent* into the stomach." Could one have said more, in severe justice, of a lion?

This sublimity of style will not bear to be tried by the nice weights and measures of truth, yet it is not always adopted with the simple intention to deceive. The difficulty, as well as the desire, of exciting attention, urges us into dishonest vehemence and magnificent mis-statements. The world is sufficiently fastidious not to feel curiosity about familiar appearances, common forms, and trite opinions. The only resource then is in the extraordinary: the object is not to inform but to surprise; and for this purpose we are driven, not to our ex-

perience, but to our invention. We must create: the Alps will not do—we must pile Pelion upon Ossa.

Considerable art, however, is necessary in these daring efforts, or they may fail to produce the notice which they aim at, or any notice at all. Mere over-grown exaggeration will not astonish us; if its gross bulk be not quickened with a due proportion of liveliness, it is only so much waste and darkness. Some of our modern dramatists give us heroes and heroines of a monstrous size and shape; but, in their anxiety to make them big, they forget to make them men and women. As a ranting actor will tear a passion to rags, one of these improvident poets will blow it up till it is almost choked, and cannot speak to be understood. In their improvements upon the littleness of nature, they not only exceed her limits, but disfigure all her forms and proportions: they are faithful to neither the measure nor the pattern of her works. Their greatness is nothing but corpulency, uninformed with any principle of life and activity. We might bear a Cupid seven feet high, if he retained his accustomed beauty and sprightliness; but it is cruel to see our little favourite tumefied into a dull, unwieldy

lump, a sort of anasarcous, or *Daniel Lambert* fairy, with no compensation for the change but in his increased dimensions and stone-weight. This style of exaggeration is frequently employed by persons of tame and unimpassioned spirits, and in their hands it is certainly a most deadening and overwhelming instrument. I know not how minds of such a temperament should deviate into such unsuitable vices; but so it is; we often see profound dulness troubled with a strange, lumbering ambition for the great and the wonderful. We do not complain of these heavy fabulists, that they strain, pervert, or obscure the truth: they convey no likelihood of it—no sign—no shadow; their uninspired exuberance falling upon you with the dead weight of sheer impossibility. There is often a perfidious solemnity and decorum in the general manner of the sort of persons I allude to, that adds greatly to the perplexity of their hearers. When a vivacious enthusiast bursts out into some violent description, his spirit, his look, tone, and gestures, at once alarm our watchfulness, and put us upon our guard. He has no sly and indirect means of lulling our suspicions and cheating us into belief. He may have his lies, but they are lies which wear their hearts on

their sleeves. Not so with your slow, prosing hyperbolist, who with a steady eye doles out his cold extravagance and dull excess. You can come to no squares with him, yet you look at him and know not how to understand him. Nothing can be more puzzling.

This anomalous variety excepted, I have rather a kindness than otherwise for a little honest exaggeration; and every species of it, leaden or mercurial, is preferable, I am ready to maintain, to its opposite—cold-blooded and penurious exactness.—The whole host of long-bow-men, light troops and heavy, are far less annoying, and, paradoxical as it may appear, less hostile to the more essential parts of truth, than the little teasing tribe—the minute, higgling worshippers of matter-of-fact. A man who in a transport of passion gives an undue extension to any determinate quantity of time, or space, or any thing else, does not exaggerate in any ill sense; he deceives nobody except those without passion, the posts of the human race. His object is not to define a frigid reality as established by law, but to describe it according to the impression which it made, and was likely to make, upon his mind, under a particular state of excitement. He has no thought about

"stubborn facts;" he makes them, and very fairly, I think, malleable to his will, and susceptible of any variations of form that his feelings require. People were cool and collected when they set about making facts; and it is very hard that a man in a fury should be bound by them. Ready-made facts will not suit him; they must be all purely his own. He is above statutes and tables, and will own no allegiance to common rules and measures. Surely he must be a very heartless person who will not admit, that an hour is not always neither more nor less than sixty minutes, and that a mile is not invariably only a mile. A matter-of-fact man has no conception of such an extravagance: he grants no indulgences; law is law with him, and he will abide by it to death. A mile, he will have it, is a mile; and the worst of it is, he has certain odious proofs and literal standards in his favour, which, backed by his oath, he will quote against a liberal adversary, till there seems nothing left for it but to own that the blockhead is correct. In vain you strive to move him from his position by appealing to his passions or his imagination, these gifts in him (if he have them at all) being under such certain control, that he carries them about with him as securely and cere-

moniously as his gloves and his stick. Never hope to exasperate him into a thought of apostasy from absolute Cocker, London measure, or avoirdupois. He stands out for a fact; and though it be stripped to positive nakedness, or robbed of its living marrow, he will still cling to it—still hug his bit of barren dryness, if it be but according to book and "his bond."

I look upon these miserable fribblers as the most intolerable plagues that go about to disturb the ease, cordiality, and trusting freedom, of familiar conversation. One of these, among a company of lively men, is as bad as the "*Six Acts*." There is no speaking before him; he lies in wait for every trivial lapse, and is ready to arrest on the spot every unimportant misnomer of time, or place, or person. He will stop a good anecdote, just before its finest moment, to ask for its credentials; and cut off the *dénouement* of a pathetic tale to question its parish. To pun in his presence would be as bad as to deny his existence: he and *equivoque* (the name is enough) could never be brought together but to fight. The humour of the thing too is, that these poor starvelings, with their bigoted strictness and peddling precision, set themselves up for lovers of truth.

But the truth is not in them, nor for them. A little niggardly truth, perhaps, a crum of certainty, they may pick up; but of truth, in its entire spirit—of "the whole truth;"—they have no notion. They will discriminate between John and Thomas, and authenticate a day of the month with fatal accuracy, and, to secure such points, will let the whole interest of a story, catastrophe and all, pass by them, "like the wind which they regard not." All that is warm, fluent, and animating in discourse, is husk and chaff to them, if there be not something that they can swear to: when the joke is complete, and the laugh has gone round, "Now," they will say, steadying themselves in their chairs, and collecting their powers, "let us come to *particulars*." With all their professed antipathy to exaggeration, they are themselves exaggerators of the most contemptible description—those who attach extravagant importance to trifles, and busy themselves to demonstrate circumstances that are not worth a thought. There is something noble at least in the error of a man who exaggerates only what is in itself great and exalted; but he that would measure a hair, or weigh a feather, is guilty of an hyperbole (if so generous a term is not too good for him) that admits of no

excuse. These scrupulists—these baters down, are themselves far more remote from truth generally than those whom they are so pleased to charge with incorrectness. A man overpowered with thirst says, that he could drink the Thames dry—and I believe him—that is, I very distinctly apprehend that he is excessively thirsty. A matter-of-fact man would receive such an assertion as an insult, and would take upon himself to prove, if he could keep from passion, that it was, from the nature of things, an absolute falsehood. He would lay down the *maximum* of a possible draught, and the way would be clear before him. He has no allowance for the natural language of an eager appetite; but summons up his soul, with all its experience, to justify the capacity of a quart pot. A lover about to be separated for a few weeks from his mistress affirms that he shall not see her again for ages—and he is perfectly right—or what man of spirit would condescend to fall in love? Who shall put definite limits to the duration of a week, a day, or an hour, spent in the absence or the presence of a mistress? The lover, with his weeks a century long, tells you pretty plainly that he is desperately impatient—tells you the truth, I contend, in contempt of any little

huckster in matter-of-fact, who would compute the ardours of a lover with the same beggarly exactness with which he would measure a yard of tape, or compare the dates of a butcher's bill.

I was walking once in company with two persons, one of whom was a fine, precipitate, *ad libitum* fellow, warm of heart, and hasty of tongue; the other, a simple, direct man, who looked at things in their just proportions, and was nice even to the smallest fractions in all his affirmations. Briefly, I was with an enthusiast and a matter-of-fact man. The former was miserable, and had every reason to be so, in regard both to his existing condition and his future prospects. He suddenly broke forth, "I never expect to be in any way better off than the wretched beggar there before us." "Yes—yes," interposed his friend, more readily than was usual with him, "with prudence, you may be a degree better as long as you live." The warm man could not bear this, and he angrily retorted, "Now, d—it! can you never be a little less precise? You mean, I suppose, to comfort me; yet what consolation is it to be assured, that I am and may be just a degree—after your freezing manner—a strict, exemplary degree, above the lowest of my species?"

The other still kept his temper, and insisted, modestly, but resolutely, "that a degree was a degree," —and there the matter ended.

I would not be understood to object to precision and minuteness, when these qualities are important, or when they can be attended to without disturbance to points of higher consideration. The most subordinate circumstances and indifferent relations of great events may be interesting, in the same manner as trifles, down to a buckle, or a shirt-pin, are worth notice, when connected with persons distinguished by extraordinary actions or talents. I would have all given of things that are worth giving: what is admirable cannot be too complete. I complain not of the matter-of-fact man on such grounds; but that the little parts of high matters, or of all matters,—those which by their nature are alone reducible to an arithmetical certainty—are the *sole* objects of his regard. Affecting to worship Truth, he sees her not in her full majesty; but overlooks her covering robes and flowing draperies, (to speak of something more than "the naked Truth,") to fasten upon a button. He would mention no particulars of the great storm with such unqualified satisfaction as that it commenced at twenty-three minutes past

four, A.M. on the 6th November, A.D. 1723. Of facts of mind and feeling he makes no account: he must have facts in a ring-fence; realities of the Almanack. He cares not to hear that a man died: he must know *where* he died and *when* he died.

Persons of this stamp make excellent lawyers: they should never travel out of Westminster-Hall. In the intricacy and darkness of the law, there is an obvious fitness in that watchful jealousy, which would as soon see a kingdom overthrown as a name or a date abused. But a matter-of-fact man will carry the captious spirit of a legal process into his moral judgments—turn lawyer against himself—cross-question the evidence of his own heart—cheat himself, against his broadest convictions, into a kind of accidental innocence—deliver himself from a piece of conscious roguery, because his name is not Timothy. He has always some petty flaw, or lucky difference, that will suffice, at a pinch, for a "not guilty," after the manner of the charity-boy who robbed a woman's orchard, and being asked whether that was the way in which he performed his "duty to his neighbour," replied, that the old lady lived in another parish. These people affect extreme indignation at the scandalous opinion of the world, if,

in appreciating their conduct, it makes some light error in particulars, though it may be perfectly just in its general spirit and bearing. Fame avers that Mr. Shuffle cheated the other night at cards, to the amount of thirteen shillings and sixpence—and that, therefore, he is a knave; against which decision he contends, that the sum was only twelve shillings —and that, therefore, he is an honest man. Mr. D—— is universally reported to be always drunk: he is mightily out of humour, however, with so gross a charge, and makes out, clearly enough, that he was sober on part of last Thursday, and the whole of Palm Sunday. Mrs. F—— is said to wear a wig, at which she is grievously offended, proving, that she wears only a *front*—and that even that does not cover more than three-fourths of her head. There is no defence against such slanderous imputations as these but patience: the innocent, we see, are not safe. "I am accustomed," says Voltaire, "to bear patiently the invectives of an ill-natured world; in this respect resembling the ladies, who are often accused of having had twenty lovers, when they never exceeded three."

Matter-of-fact men, it is thought, are good servants, whose highest merit is to do as they are

bidden, to be precise and punctual in the nicest circumstances of their duty. I would not deny them what credit they may deserve; but I cannot, even in such lowly capacity, allow them unconditional praise. A master had need to be very select in his own phrases before he absolutely trusts them.—Who would wish to be obeyed to the very letter in all his orders, for three days together? In the changeful bustle of this various life, a modicum of discretionary power and spontaneous action should be permitted to the humblest and most subservient agents. A punctilious menial may serve you to your heart's desire for two days, and bring you to I know not what sorrow or shame on the third, by no other crime than an unlucky obedience to your commands. You desire that your horse shall be *always* at the door at eleven o'clock, and that your dinner shall *invariably* be on the table at four; but take care, in your heedless strictness, that your horse be not found some morning perishing, according to orders, at your door, for half a dozen hours in a pelting rain; or that your mutton be not, at your special request, cooling itself to stone, while you are distinctly known to be a good hour and a half away from it.

Matter-of-fact men, again, it might be thought, would form admirable soldiers; and so they would, no doubt, as far as a formal attention to the petty detail of an imperious discipline could make them so; but such a habit would not often be found combined, I fancy, with the impetuous heroism and daring which, as Bonaparte was the first in modern times to prove, is so much more effective, as an instrument of war, than a dull system of rigorous drilling and intricate manœuvres. The Germans are matter-of-fact soldiers—no troops being so remarkable, more by force of education, I believe, than of natural temperament, for their submission to an unvarying formality in all their martial movements. They do nothing extempore; nothing by accident—surrendering themselves up, as Madame de Staël says, to "a sort of pedantic tactics," in the place of liveliness and enterprise. They would despise defeat if "according to rule," and scarcely prize victory if in opposition to it. Methodical and predetermined in all their proceedings, you may calculate, to the division of a degree, what they can do and will do; but never expect from them one of those fine harebrained and dazzling exploits, which are sometimes achieved by more flighty spirits, under

the impulse only of a stubborn will and reckless confidence.

I remember a curious instance of military exactness in the conduct of a soldier (a German by the way) who was stationed as a sentinel on Margate Pier-head, during a night-storm of tremendous violence, in the course of which nearly the whole pier was destroyed by an irruption of the sea, the high-street of the town undermined, and many of the houses washed down. In this dreadful night, which was made more bitter by a fall of snow and intense cold, the poor fellow stuck to his station till his life was in the most imminent danger. He was found by some seamen, who went to his relief, clinging to a post, and with great difficulty maintaining his hold against the sea which dashed over him—and which, not long after his removal, swept away the very ground on which he had stood, and made a free passage into the harbour. When he was asked how he could be such a fool as to stay there only to be drowned, he barely said, that "he had no thought of moving till he was *relieved*, and that it still wanted a full half-hour of the time." Had this devotedness to duty and contempt of danger been shown for any useful or generous purpose, I could

have worshipped the man; but I have no great consideration for the mere steady stupidity which could hold him fast at such a moment, and at such a risk, when he had no worthier pretence than his respect for the formalities of the parade. This man, who would not stir from his useless post to save his own life, would not have stirred, I suspect, to save the whole town from destruction. And herein is the danger of trusting too freely to such minds, on the strength only of their slavish docility and literal obedience. They are very well while the road is straight, but they are lost without resource whenever they come to a turning. My affection, I confess, is for men of a warmer, more adventurous and inventive, kind, who, in spite of their occasional errors of exaggeration and precipitancy, are, take them for all in all, better framed for the mingled and shifting circumstances of human action and suffering. If my way lay through a travelled country, I would put up with a Scotchman, or a worse man, as my guide over the exact roads—the true bridges—and the right fords; but if my unprecedented journey was over a pathless desert, obstructed by quagmires and quicksands, and fruitful of accidents, requiring sudden plans,

and sudden changes of plans, I would choose for my leader an Irishman. A *bull*, it may be insinuated, would be an awkward matter in a bog—but I abide by my preference notwithstanding. The Irishman would blunder through with me, or I am mistaken.

ON HONESTY.

I LOOK upon moral honesty, as consisting of a pure and unconditional respect for the distinctions of *meum et tuum* for their own sake, to be the rarest quality in human nature. Indeed, if it might not appear too bold for a prefatory remark, I should go so far as to deny the existence of any such quality altogether, setting it down as a chimera of the schools, or at best as a fanciful possibility—the philosopher's stone of ethics. I am not learned in the Spurzheim topography of the skull, and therefore cannot lay a demonstrative finger on the spot; but if there be truth in the science, I venture to affirm that his "*secretiveness*" has an answering bump on every head among us that is out of its first cap. Observe the dispositions and habits of children and savages, or of any people in whom inclination has not been adulterated by the artifices of law. How unaffected, how guileless is their knavery! It sits

upon them not as an acquired sin, but as a piece of natural freedom,—a fine generous error of the original heart. The South Sea islanders, with their pretty primitive tricks, have been shockingly used by their various visitors. They have always been reported to be thieves, in our European sense of that opprobrious title, and treated accordingly. Poor honest rogues not of their own making, I pity them heartily! It is true, they would become proprietors of a hatchet, or a ten-penny nail, let it belong to whom it might; and what then? The true thieves, it has always appeared to me, were those who had the heart to make them restore what it so suited them to call their own. I could as soon have reclaimed an apple that a baby had *stolen* from my pocket, as have defrauded one of these simple creatures of any thing that it had pleased him in his liberality to take from me. *Homo sum, nihil humani a me* ALIENUM *puto*—in other words, my brethren of Owhyhee should have picked my pockets, and welcome.

How nearly allied are covetousness and dishonesty!—and are we not all covetous? We are alive, at least, to the great directing impulse of the robber, however we may have learned, on prudential

considerations, to moderate its action. We refrain, I grant; but our mouths water,—and that is not to be innocent. The *mala mens*—the desire,—the diagnostic bump, are not to be removed.—Thieving is a hard word, a low phrase for general application; let us call it the disposition to humour our wants, the longing to appropriate whatever presents itself to our tastes and fancies as agreeable or convenient. We are not all thieves, in the vulgar sense of the term—far from it. A thief is not a man who has a love of taking to himself whatsoever pleases him, but one who will take, in contempt of all consequences. He is insensible to infamy, and therein differs from us all,—not in that he is dishonest. But how should there be infamy connected with offences to which we have all an eager, if not an equal, proclivity? There is a sort of conventional shame that protects our possessions, not the shame of dishonesty, but the shame of the gallows. In the absence of any provision in our moral sense, it was necessary, for the security of property, to set up a prejudice against being hanged. The desire of keeping, coeval and conspiring with the desire of getting, made it suitable, upon the whole, that laws should be appointed for restraining the licentious-

ness of the general hand. Avarice, with whatever pain, has politic reasons for checking the ardour of its great provider, Covetousness.—Such artificial checks, however, can be regarded only in the light of commercial regulations, of effectual service to the morality of the shops, but without much influence upon that of our minds. We have no instinctive horror of dishonesty in our nature, as we have of many other crimes. We have no sense of naked and intrinsic deformity in it, and therefore dress it up in frightful clothing—black its face, and then call it a monster. It is no true fiend, but "a painted devil," which we permit, by a species of collusion, to call the blushes to our cheeks, and make our hearts quake within us. The judge—the bar—the rope—these are the dread supplements which constitute its sin and shame. A man would bear to hear any thing of an ancestor but that he had been hanged. Were a nobleman to be convicted of "stealing to the amount of forty shillings," we should despise him, not for the enormity of his crime, but for the stigma of its punishment. That he should no longer be an honest man we could bear; but he is no longer a gentleman—and we close our hearts against him for ever. We give

ourselves airs, because we feel that we could not have exposed ourselves to such a penalty, and so call ourselves honest. We are respecters of the law, not honest. A rogue (if such names must be) who secures a good prize from the pocket of another, is a "lucky dog;" we hear of his *success*, and wink, and look sly and sympathetic at one another: take the wretch to Bow-street, and you make him a thief, whom we may not countenance.

> ——— In the crowd,
> May it please your Excellency, your thief looks
> Exactly like the rest, or rather better;
> 'Tis only at the bar, and in the dungeon,
> That wise men know your felon by his features.

If there is no sacrifice of gentility and public character; if a man is low enough in the world to be hanged without discredit, mere thieving, even in its compound iniquity of crime and penalty, is not regarded with any very serious displeasure. The thief is hanged, to be sure, in deference to our anti-social interests in our watches, snuff-boxes, and pocket-handkerchiefs; but, morally speaking, how are we affected? One of the sprightliest articles I remember in a celebrated Review was on the subject of *Botany Bay*—and who wonders? See our

police reports, with their regular formulary of wit and banter; the jokes on the bench; the facetiousness of counsel, and the general waggery that sparkles on the face of the whole court, where nothing more heinous is in question than a little sleight of hand by which property has changed its owner. One wonders sometimes how the comedy should be wound up into "guilty,"—whips, chains, or death. What hearty glee and laughter are always called forth by the representation of the Beggar's Opera—a whole theatre, boxes—pit—galleries, betrayed into one expression of chuckling consciousness, not by the touches of general satire, or innocent playfulness, with which the piece abounds, but by the villany of the business—the irresistible *Filch*. This spectacle is too much for our caution; it breaks through all our assumptions of affectation and disguise, and discovers our true kind and class, in the manner that a handful of nuts brought out, in a moment, the inalienable ape-hood of the monkey-players. The neatness, and suitable drollery, with which poor little Simmons used to whisk away a neighbour's handkerchief was acknowledged—felt, by the whole house. Could not people sit for ever, let me ask, to witness the ravenous thievery of

Grimaldi?—Could we ever tire, as long as he would be stealing sausages for our entertainment? It is wonderful, indeed, as the song says, that "we have not better company—at Tyburn Tree."

The law, in setting up its fences and land-marks, mercifully left us some open ground—a patch of *common* here and there, on which we may indulge our free natures without fear or responsibility. In these "liberties," there is no security for our fair conduct but our in-born honesty; and how does it acquit itself in its office? Tell a winning gamester that he has taken the whole worldly support from some poor wretch, and given him over, with a wife and children, to famine or a jail; appeal to his honesty, you have potent claims; tell him that the man whom he has ruined had no exclusive title to the money which he risked; that, if callous on his own account, he had no right to play away the interests of his wife and children in his property; in short, that he was dishonest in his losses, and that the winner must be equally so in his gains, differing only, as the receiver differs from the thief. "Very afflicting," the gamester will allow, or, more characteristically, "very unlucky"—but will he restore the money?—not a stiver.

A gentleman cannot be a horse-stealer, for obvious reasons; but may he not sell a horse to an acquaintance, and conceal, or not proclaim, his blemishes? We are very willing at all events to take a *warranty*, even from "the best nobleman in the land." Stealing books in a friendly familiar way; pocketing carelessly a light pamphlet, or portable poem, is not felony; and what is the consequence? Every man who has a library gives out with angry determinacy, that he never lends a book: he does not wish to be personal; but press him, and he will inform you, that he never in his life lent one that was returned. I have myself lost (lost indeed!) the fifteenth number of the Edinburgh Review, and, with all I can say, I have not a friend who has the candour to come forward and confess the robbery. Stealing other people's thoughts out of books, I just mention, as decidedly of kin to the great family-failing that I am treating of. There is vindictive law, however, for this description of pilfering—the critics!—not over-honest themselves, as witness—their *extracts*.

Law, if it confines our hands, cannot control our hearts: it may not allow us to be thieves, but it cannot make us honest. Look at the old lady (we

all know whom) at the whist-table. What is it that keeps her from sweeping into her own lap every six-pence on the board? Watch her unholy eagerness; her daring equivocations; her "two by honours"—always; her flushed and hurrying agitations on the very borders of petty larceny, and say if she is honest:—sincerely, does she despise the thought of six-pences that do not belong to her? The good lady has a horror of Sir Robert Birnie that may not be acknowledged by Bill Soames, but is she more honest? The familiar caution of "Hold up your cards, sir," is really very little removed in the spirit of its signification from the well-known cry of "Mind your pockets, ladies and gentlemen." A round game, if the truth may be told, is no other, as concerns the minds of the parties, than a general scramble—a "snatch" at the pool—a "go it" for the sweepstakes. People may talk as they please about playing fair, and the rules of the game, but the essence of the sport is precisely *fingering*. There is no sight more unpleasant than a party of young women at a round game, striving with reddened and fierce faces to make beggars of one another. I have seen a beautiful girl of eighteen rendered positively offensive to look at, by the

bravo-like manner with which she would turn up *vingt-un*. I could have yielded up what money I ever carry, or have to carry, to a regular "stand and deliver," on Finchley Common, with far less reluctance, than to this Macheath of the card-table. The mistaken creature robbed herself of so much, while she was robbing me, that I could in no way pardon her. For my part, I would sooner see women drinking brandy than winning half-crowns. If they will play at cards, let it be only "for love," or some such lady-like stake. They *should* know the interests of their own attractions; yet surely a pretty woman is guilty of a grievous miscalculation, when she wastes her smiles and frowns on a pool at loo. How can an angel with any face be asking a gentleman, one dying for her perhaps, for change for a pound note, or three six-pences for eighteen-pence? The whole business has a detestable taint of meanness, vulgarity, and hard-heartedness, about it. Wax lights and rose-wood tables cannot sanctify such exhibitions:—with the Countess behind her cards, and the purple-nosed hag at the fair behind her round-about, "one down—two down,"—the little, dirty, narrow, degrading passion is the same. But I am wandering.—

I have stated the desire of gratifying our wants to be the soul of dishonesty; and it will be found, I believe, that people are honest in proportion to the fewness of their wants. Who is honest? He who has no want that he cannot supply, and no wish that he cannot satisfy. Savages, who want, or procure with difficulty and imperfectly, the first necessaries of life, are thieves by fatality. To tell them to be honest is like telling them not to be hungry. A civilized people then, in a land of abundance, are alone "all honourable men?" By no means—for if among them the more imperative necessities of our condition are fully and readily provided for, they have an infinity of superadded wants, the growth of luxury and refinement, that are quite sufficient to preserve our original *secretiveness* in full life and activity. A man who wants food and clothing, and one who wants a carriage and an opera-box, are equally in the broad way of dishonesty. I speak of dishonesty in relation to pure moral principle: that we keep our fingers in order is nothing; the poor savages will not be behind our politeships in this point of decorum, when it shall please them, on "some fair future day," to set up lawyers, judges, and gibbets. The inequalities that prevail, and

must prevail, in civilized society, will not allow our minds to be at rest: there is always something to envy and to want, even for those who have more than they want. A gentleman who can feed fifty mouths, besides his own, at dinner-time, might be said to have enough, were it not notorious that Lord C—— frequently sits down to a meal with two hundred guests at his table. The baronet is always in a state of temptation till he is a lord; and the lord is any body's man but his own, as long as there is a ribbon or a garter which he does not possess. There is no "highest" amongst men—no pre-eminent resting-place for any one, from whence he can see nothing that is not beneath him. Kings have their competitors, and are as full of wants as paupers. Dishonesty in such high personages is called ambition; but call it what you please, it is the same restless and rapacious greediness, acting according to its station and its opportunities, as influences the meanest amongst us. Kings would be sacking territories and pilfering prerogative, in the same spirit with which beggars would be robbing hen-roosts. It has been justly observed that, as respects manners and moral character, there are many striking points of resemblance between the

extreme conditions of human life—between kings and the lowest of their subjects. The parties are alike free from responsibility, the one being too high, and the other too low, to be reached by the checks of custom and public opinion. It proves so, I think, very unequivocally, in the affair of honesty. The whole world, I sincerely believe, is a knave at bottom; but a man distinguished only by a good coat on his back must keep his nature down, and, whatever may be his dreams, must wake and walk as the law directs. Kings and the man of rags alone do as they please: there is no "pining in thought" for them; they leave dreaming to those beneath or above them, and dash gallantly into the field of action, your only fearless depredators. Were I a king—but I forbear;—my modesty faints before so strange an hypothesis.

There are wants which seem to be craving and impetuous, in proportion as they are far-fetched and irrelevant, or removed from common feeling and participation. Collectors—those who number among their wants rare prints and pictures, an *unique* gem, or solitary coin—are thieves to a man. The hankering of the collector is complex, being founded on his regret for what he has not, and for what others have.

He would glory in acquiring a Queen Anne's farthing, but would be still sleepless, if he could not take it from Mr. Davies. Bury it—let it not be at all, and he might be content; but that it should be, and for another, is intolerable. Rarities in a national museum create no envy; they belong to nobody: it is in the house of a friend that they become provoking, and drive a man to sin. That it is possible for a virtuoso of common pretensions, so beset and excited, to be strictly honest, I quite deny. Mr. Longfoot has not stolen, I know, and will not, and would not steal, I believe, a Hogarth print in my possession, which is just *wanting* to make his set complete; but, between friends, let me ask him, if he has not in his heart purloined it a hundred times over. If, as he stood with his eyes fixed upon it last Tuesday, for instance, in a state of abstraction, he was not rioting in the luxury of an hypothetical felony, I am a greater dunce at interpreting a reverie than I should be willing to consider myself. I have myself some *virtu* about me, and have of course my "confessions" on the subject, if I choose to make them. My collection, as yet, is fairly come by, I believe; but I should be much

obliged to Mr. H. if he would not show me that *Otho* of his any more. *Verbum sat.*

A great city is a perilous school for dishonesty, not only from the relief that it exposes to the naked and hungry, but from the ostentatious enticements to enjoyment with which it meets every whimsical wish and want that can enter the imagination of luxurious man. The gorgeous shops of London, which invent for us half the wants that they supply, are enough to make the best of us tremble for the possible consequences. Where is the person, gentle or simple, that can walk through Oxford-street, and be sensible, within his own bosom, that he is an honest man? The things are all for sale, we know; but what is to become of "poor human nature," with no money in her pocket. Look at those youngsters, who, with slabbering mouths and vindictive eyes, beset the windows of the pastrycooks; observe that shabby oldish gentleman with the green spectacles, dreaming and sighing away half the morning at the outside (he dares not go in) of the curiosity-shop; mark that lean thoughtful person (he has not sixpence in the world) *handling* that precious turbot; and the gaily-dressed spark, a door or two farther

on, pondering over those enthralling cases of rings, seals, and shirt-pins; see how the smart jockey in top-boots there stares at, till he almost owns, every *Dennet* and *Tilbury* at the coach-makers; and with what a kingly smile that poor-author-like-looking man surveys the phenomena of the cook's shop—he is eating that ham with the glass between them; and then note the women, the crowds, well-dressed and ill-dressed, old and young, who haunt the shops as under a spell; not those who bargain or buy,—let them pass—but the far greater multitudes who flutter about the windows and doors, who look, and think, and fancy, and guess, and wonder, and like, and wish, and try, and touch, and—all but take;—these various persons, innocent as they seem, and as they are in the judgment of the law, what are they before their consciences?—Such indulgences are so habitual to us, and pass through our minds in such easy and rapid succession, that we pay no deep attention to them in their particulars, and suffer ourselves night after night (so graceless do we become) to sleep and forget them. It would be curious, and not uninstructive, were a person, in mercantile phrase, to open a regular account against himself touching such proceedings, so that all his contraband

imaginations before shop-windows might be occasionally served up to him in a full and formal bill of lading. A day-book like this, *honestly* kept (there's the rub again) would be as a looking-glass, in which a man might see his true face, though one which he and his friends might scarcely be willing to own. Any lady thinking herself honest would be startled, I dare say, at a diary of but a single morning's fraudulence set forth in full amount;—four dozen Cashmire shawls—twelve gross of straw bonnets—one hundred lace caps, and so on, a multitudinous litter of ill-gotten property turned out before her conscience, which might remind her with advantage of those veritable heaps of plunder, that are frequently brought to light in the hands of some practical rogue, and strewed, to the amazement of the world, before the eyes of some inquisitor of the police. The lady, perhaps, sees no ghosts of skeleton-keys, pick-locks, and iron crows, amidst her fancy-pillage,—but there the goods are—I stick to that;—and how came they there? Shopping and shop-lifting, I fear, are but too frequently, in a moral sense, convertible terms: the latter has a very bad name, and certainly deserves it, while her hypocrite-sister, who professes "to pay for every

thing," looks the world in the face, and meets with reverence. Pay for every thing!—I have seen a lady, after poring for two hours over unfurled roods of cambrics, prints, and muslins, till the whole counter was a pile of ruin and disorder before her, finally come to a conclusion for three yards of penny bobbin, and take her leave. If this lady had not more for her money than was honest, I give up the question.

Upon the whole, I am clearly of opinion, that a man who has it at heart to be wholly honest, who, while he would scorn to be a thief, would keep his inclinations also "from picking and stealing," must avoid the haunts of fashionable wants and necessities, fly from cities and all large assemblages of his fellows, and not rest with confidence, till he reaches the mountains of Switzerland or Wales. In these simple regions, where enough to eat is pretty nearly the limit of civilization, he will find the only home of pure, uncoveting honesty. The savage is a craver—*meum* or *tuum*—he eats any thing that he can get; but in the condition next above his, where every one is sure of his lawful dinner, and no one has learned any other want,—there, people are by necessity content; there, no one covets what another

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has *not* got. Perfect plenty and perfect equality leave no motive for stealing or wishing: every stomach is full—and for the rest—rocks and waterfalls move no envy, they are yours and mine; the sky has no partialities, it covers us all. This is to be honest on very hard terms, to be sure: it is better, perhaps, to be a bit of a rogue in good company.

ON HUNTING.

I AM not going, I premise, to be scientific, and deep, and, unintelligible on my subject. I once asked a sportsman of the highest authority, how long it might require to make a man of common parts a perfect fox-hunter. He informed me, that common parts would do nothing at all; but that "a clever fellow," with favourable opportunities and severe application, might in four years, he thought it probable, fit himself to appear, with respectability at least, in any "hunt" that he was acquainted with. As for perfect fox-hunters—there are not three, he assured me, in the three kingdoms. Now, I do not propose to develope any mysteries of the chase, such as my sage informant must have contemplated, when he laid down this serious course of discipline and induction. I am not one of the perfect fox-hunters of these realms; but having been in the way of late of seeing a good

deal of various modes of hunting, I would, for the benefit of the uninitiated, set down the results of my observation—giving them, I trust, a sufficient notion of what really belongs to an amusement which, as they must have heard, supplies for six months in the year, to gentlemen in the country, the staple-interest of life. The *greenest* need not fear from me any swaggering airs of superiority: I will not seek to perplex them by mystifying trifles, nor mortify them in their helplessness, like some bullying smatterers that I wot of, by means only of a little technical slang. The dignity of what I have to state shall not be wrapped up in any unfair disguises, but be honestly exposed before them, no better than common English can make it.

It will give clearness, perhaps, to some of my details, if, preparatory to taking the field, I give some little account of the nature of the country (on the coast of Sussex) which has been the scene of my experience in the chase. The Sussex Downs, as all Brighton knows, generally present a very uninteresting appearance—a combination of round-topped, lumpish hills, shelving down generally with a rapid descent, but smooth, and equal, and uniform, as the inside of a bowl. In some parts of the county,

however, they exhibit a more diversified character. About a mile to the northward of the little town of Seaford, commences a district of open or down-country, which, to the birds who look upon it from mid-air, must have very much the aspect of a solid ocean—so multitudinous are the chasms and glens by which it is divided. These glens seldom exceed a hundred feet in depth; their sides are always steep, sometimes nearly perpendicular, having concave surfaces, smoothed and planed, as if by human art. Most of them are so narrow at the bottom, as scarcely to afford room for the wheels of a cart; and they intersect each other like the streets of a town. One of these narrow green alleys forms a complete and most regular circle, from which, at various intervals, diverge other alleys of the same character, which pursue short windings among the hills, and may lead you, if tempted to follow them, by very unexpected openings into the circle again. The whole of these downs, hills, and hollows, are unrelieved by a tree or bush; but covered with a short herbage, and chequered with furze-brakes, which give shelter to an abundance of foxes, hares, and partridges.

Such a country, considered in relation to hunting,

has this peculiarity, my reader will apprehend, that it offers no leaps—no immortality for those who would break their necks over stone walls and stake-bound hedges. We have hills, however, with their steep sides slippery as glass, and perforated with rabbit-holes, which supply quite as much dignity to the chase as can be required from difficulty and peril. In critical moments of the day, you will see heroes rush down these hills with a thoughtless impetuosity, that nothing but the occasion can excuse. You must have a horse carefully broken and tutored to such experiments; when you will find him, as you desire it, freely *skating* down with you some hundred feet, rarely taking his legs from the ground, yet keeping himself upon them with wonderful skill and certainty. There is always a degree of risk, it may be supposed, in these lubricous descents; but what is the life of a man, when the question is the death of a fox? But to our sport: and first for—

THE HARRIERS.

The establishment in which I have been a party in this department of the chase is only a farmer's "hunt," affecting no *style* or pomp, but prosecuting

its essential business with a degree of spirit not to be surpassed. The pack was kept till very lately, and had been kept for some forty years, by the celebrated "Old Martin,"—so I venture to call him, for, within one degree of latitude at least, his name was as general as the air. He was the finest old man I ever saw—*was*, I say, (melancholy tense!) for, with sorrow I speak it, he is now no more. At the time when I first knew him, he was some years beyond seventy, yet ruddy and fresh as the morning—firm, muscular, active—despising cold, and rain, and hail, and hurricanes, and battling through the utmost fatigues of the manly exercise in which he delighted, with all the gaiety of youth. He was reputed to be the most fearless rider in the county; yet his daring was not greater than his skill, for he never met with an accident. During the season, he used to hunt, just as at five-and-twenty, three days in a week, regularly following his huntsman from the kennel at ten in the morning, and returning with him at nightfall. Frost and snow apart, no description of weather had power to keep him at home on a hunting-day. As master of the pack, he had a special character to maintain, which would not allow him to shrink

from circumstances, that his less restricted companions of the field might hesitate to face. Come what come might, the hounds were always at the place of meeting at the predestined hour; and many and many a time has the old gentleman followed up the chase through a whole day of ceaseless rain, and raving wind, with no partner but his huntsman, who travelled on foot, and was seldom near him. The distinguishing mark in his dress was a white smock-frock, out of which he was never seen except at church on Sundays. From this homely garb, together with an extreme plainness and simplicity in his general character and habits, he was regarded as the last surviving representative of any note in this part of the world, of the old school of farmers, as it existed before farmers had coated and booted themselves into gentlemen. That he did not think it becoming to cast off his frock on light pretences may be inferred from the fact, that he was worth above a hundred thousand pounds. He was called by his brother-sportsmen, in allusion to his frock, the flag-admiral; his white drapery flapping in the wind, and far seen on the hills, being an excellent signal for loiterers gone astray, who might be sure that the frock and the hounds were

not far apart. I was with him, I have a pride in recollecting, on the last day that he was permitted to hunt on those hills, which for half a century he had gladdened with his merry halloo! and hark forward! He was ill, and looked suddenly and alarmingly altered; but he brightened up at the spirit-stirring call of his dogs, and rode well throughout the chase—true, to the latest moment, to the only amusement which he had ever considered worth the notice of a man. The hunt closed on this occasion at precisely half-past two o'clock; and at that hour, to give some notion of the spirit of this gallant old man, he set off to ride seven miles to some dinner of business at Pevensey, and came back to his bed at night. He never went out again. His complaint was some febrile disorder which was not to be subdued. After a few days of suffering, he was, with some hesitation on his own part attended for the first time in his memory by a doctor, a sort of mediator for whom he had always expressed the greatest contempt. There was no hope among his friends from this hour: he took physic and—died. Such a man is not to be replaced. There will be no more hunting, it is agreed,

on the heights of Firle. Hounds if you like, and people to follow them—but no more hunting.

For the other members of the "hunt," a more cursory notice will suffice. They consisted of about a dozen farmers, of various ages, from twenty to fifty,—hard, tough, sturdy fellows, with iron fibres and dauntless hearts; together with five or six veterans, an invalid company, who, though prevented by age and infirmity, by lameness, rheumatism, and dislocations, from joining in the activities of the field, could not consent to retire altogether from the scene, but would be crawling about to see and hear what was going on; helping out their little part in the present sport, by the recollections which it called forth of better and brisker days. One of them had a dislocated hip, the result of a fall from his horse; which made his seat on the saddle so wearisome and uneasy, that he was obliged to dismount every half-hour, to relieve himself by a change of posture. He admitted that hunting was grown a somewhat painful exercise to him; but he had hunted, he said, with Old Martin for forty years, and—what could he do? "Besides," said he, "I can rest now and then, and my mare (I will say that for her) is the

easiest beast in the world,—so that, somehow or other, I contrive, thank God, to make out a morning's amusement yet." This open country, with its commanding eminences, is very favourable to these veterans, allowing them generally, with a few judicious changes on their part in their posts of observation, to be within sight or sound of the hunt from the starting to the death. The hare, indeed, will sometimes run from them out of all reasonable bounds, but in that event they have expectation and conjecture to keep them warm; and will willingly wait for an hour or two, till the return of the dogs, finding an ample reward for their patience in the very earliest news that takes air, of all that has transpired in their absence.

On one of those mornings which sportsmen combine to call fine, and which keep every body else within doors, these "merry men all" meet to beat up the covers, let us say, of *Norton-Top*. A pleasant rain and welcome; but a bright sun never made a fine morning yet, or Old Martin knew nothing about it. Let there not be much wind either, if you would prosper, this being an agent almost as offensive to the moist scent as the sun. The hounds (thirty to the pack) are uncoupled, and, after a pre-

lusive roll, and shake, and run, dash into the blood-letting thicket of furze, or hawth, as we call it, unmindful of the pins and needles that would obstruct their passage, save that here and there you may hear a testy yelp, or a surly growl, as the disposition of the creature may be, from one over-hasty, or perhaps, as Old Martin would say, "out of humour this morning." The horsemen scatter themselves wide, and keep beating away with their whips, while now and then a promising cry bursts from some favourite dog, just to preserve our attention from sleeping, and assure us that we are amused. That 's *Jowler* again!—she is just before him; the cry becomes more general, quick, and pressing—they are hot upon her trail—and presently, out she skips, and away for her life—a fine hare to be sure—holla! a view—holla! True to the shout, the dogs are out of the thicket in a moment—down go their fatal noses to the ground—they catch the scent, and gaily they run, the whole pack setting up a full, loud, continuous cry, which rolls out upon the wind in a stream of pervading melody, that seems like the natural music of the hills. Have I a reader who has not heard this cry? Oh! let him rouse himself; life is short; let him not die in igno-

rance; Catalani will come to *him*; away then to Leicestershire, or Northumberland, or Cornwall,—any where—but do let him hear this blithe field-song of the hounds. Sincerely, it is beautiful.

There is nothing violent and hurried in hare-hunting, like the first burst after a fox: the men of might, who ride close to the dogs or thereabouts, set off at an easy gallop, not more than agreeable to a horse of common powers; while the elders are seen edging away at a brisk walk for some neighbouring point, near which the hare will go, or ought to go, as they will prove unanswerably, should she venture to transgress the received rules and precedents. She generally returns to the seat from which she was put up, running, as all the world knows, in a circle, or something sometimes like it, we had better say, that we may keep on good terms with the mathematical. At starting, she tears away at her utmost speed for a mile or more, and distances the dogs half way; she then returns, diverging a little to the right or left, that she may not run into the mouths of her enemies—a necessity which accounts for, what we call, the circularity of her course. Her flight from home is direct and precipitate; but on her way back, when she has gained a little time

for consideration and stratagem, she describes a curious labyrinth of short turnings and windings, as if to perplex the dogs by the intricacy of her track. These are her usual proceedings, though they are liable to many innovations, depending, among other causes, upon the temperature of the scent, which, as it varies the activity of the dogs, will often vary the movements of the hare. But these are distinctions to be sufficiently explained only in the field. "She'll come back here," said I: "What!" replied Old Martin, "with the wind at east?" and I was silenced.

The hounds, whom we left in full cry, continue their music without remission as long as they are faithful to the scent; as a summons, it should seem, like the seaman's cry, to pull together, or keep together; and it is a certain proof to themselves and their followers that they are in the right way. On the instant that they are "at fault," or lose the scent, they are silent, and the whole pack immediately disperse and scour over the ground, that they may nose out their game again. When their mouths become mute, however, their tails begin to speak, and explain, as they wag, with the eloquence of words, their eagerness and impatience: as long as

these are in motion there is hope; when they settle into stillness, all is lost. There are five or six dogs in the pack of known sagacity and experience, who are looked up to by the rest, in all circumstances of embarrassment, for counsel and direction. If some ignorant puppy, of no name or nose, presumes to state his opinion in a doubtful case, in some light inconsequential speech, nobody thinks of attending to it, except the huntsman, perhaps, with his reproving whip; but if the unerring *Trollop*, or old *Jowler*; set up their decisive voices, the challenge is answered by every mouth in the pack; a simultaneous rush is made to the spot, the scent is recovered, and all is life and action once more.

These "faults" are very frequent occurrences, and, if they are not too much prolonged, rather aid the interest of the sport than otherwise, inasmuch as they call forth all the varied instincts of the dogs and their game, and bring into exercise the most hidden knowledge, and the nicest discrimination, of the sportsmen. I speak only from my own feelings on the subject, and it is proper to acknowledge that, in the general opinion, a "fault" is a fault. The weather, in its impression on the scent, is the great father of "faults;" but they may arise from other

accidents, even when the day is in every respect favourable. The intervention of ploughed land, on which the scent soon cools or evaporates, is at least perilous; but sheep-stains, recently left by a flock, are fatal; they cut off the scent irrecoverably, making a gap, as it were, in the clue, in which the dogs have not even a hint for their guidance. These *dicta* of mine are meant to apply only to our own particular "hunt;" other packs, in differently conditioned countries, have, no doubt, "faults" of their own, which I know nothing about. *Non omnia*, &c.

An hour and a half may be stated as the average duration of a chase, with all its interruptions, in which time the hare may run ten or twelve miles; but if the scent is strong, and she is closely pressed, she may come to her death in considerably less time, after running a much greater distance. At the latter end of the season, in February and March, the hares become exceedingly wild, and run with all the vigour and determinacy of a fox, justifying the well-known comparative, "as mad as a March hare." We have it on record, safe for our posterity, that on the 13th of February, 1822, a hare, put up by old Martin himself, led us a chase of twenty-five miles, in which she ran through seven——wasn't it

seven, Mr. Stace? yes, seven parishes, swam across a river, and back again, and finally made her escape, leaving dogs, and horses, and men breathless, and worn out behind her. But I am too talkative by half, and they always said so of me in the field. We started, I think, from *Norton-Top:* suppose then, after the usual rounds, that you see the hare at last (a sorry mark for so many foes) sorely beleaguered —looking dark and draggled—and limping heavily along; then stopping to listen—again tottering on a little—and again stopping; and at every step, and every pause, hearing the death-cry grow nearer and louder. At this period the sternness of my purpose would relent: I was always inclined to say, like Macbeth, "we will proceed no further in this business," and would willingly have given the little animal a kinder reward than awaited her, for the amusement that she had afforded me. But it might not be: the dogs rush in upon her and seize her—the horsemen gallop up—cut away with their whips—hold up the game—and the cry is dead! dead! dead! There might happen to be no horseman near at this moment; in which case, the hare, bones, skin, and all, would in a few seconds be divided, and swallowed amongst the hounds, *no* signs

being left but the stains of blood upon their jaws. But so disgraceful a casualty as this was rare indeed under the reign of our vigilant and active commander. I loved to see him always at this crowning scene of our sport. He would seize the hare, and throw it at his feet, to indicate its death to the dogs, who, looking up at him, and baying and howling, would cluster in a circle round him, keeping precisely at whip's length from the centre, or their master—our father-sportsman, who stood like a conqueror—his venerable face suffused all over with a placid triumph, which it was impossible not to sympathise with. Presently he would prepare for his last offices to the hare on this side the dish. Diving into the depths of his capacious breeches-pocket—the right pocket—whose hard contents were plainly mapped out in grease and dirt on the outside—he would pull forth his knife of all work—deliberately open it—make the right incision, tear out the entrails of the animal, and dash them among the dogs—at the same time, with insidious and crimsoned finger (for he loved a joke), widening the mouth of some staring shepherd-boy, who would be standing at his elbow. Poor Old Martin! Not two months ago, I saw him doing, looking, joking, just as I

have described him. Peace be with you, my old friend! your good deeds—generous—charitable—were not few; and if to love a drizzly morning three days in a week be no sin, you can have little to answer for.

COURSING.

This is a gentle exercise, not unfriendly to a sunny morning—hunting fit for a lady—indeed, the dogs employed seem made on purpose for the ladies. The greyhound, I think, is the most beautiful animal in the world—beautiful, not only from its graceful lines and perfect symmetry, but from the palpable expediency of its frame in all its parts, as a thing of speed. The powers of other brutes are not obvious till they are discovered to us in action; but a single glance at the greyhound, even in repose, assures us that its business is to run. There is no other animal, that I know of, so entirely dependent for its prey on swiftness of foot; and there is none in which nature has provided for this single attribute with so cautious and delicate a hand. In comparing the greyhound with other dogs, it is curious to observe, while it preserves all their generic distinctions, the numerous and minute deviations that

occur in every division of its structure, adapted to the particular destination of its powers. Its small pointed head; its long, light, fleshless body; the curved and flexible spine acting with the force of a spring; its long, sinewy, tapering legs; its close, thin skin, unencumbered with a wrinkle or a hair that could be spared—all these are peculiarities that distinguish it from every other dog, and are all speakingly in aid of one design. Even the pendulous, cord-like tail, that seems to steal along after the animal, without a movement to waste, is full of appropriate character. The creature seems to have no bowels; the yawning, hungry vacuum in their place being objected to by some *solid* judges as unsightly; though, with all deference, I think it a beauty, if not in itself, in its combination with the general structure of the dog, and the whole meaning of its expressive figure. Any other dog, so thin in all respects, would be full of clumsy protuberances, and appear uncouth and death-like; but the greyhound, a mere skeleton in a skin, cushioned only with a few tense, springy muscles about the loins and shoulders, which you may count like the ribs, has yet not a sharp point or hard angle about

it; its finely-turned mechanism presenting only a series of gentle bends and wavy lines, a perfect model of shapeliness and elegance.

There is a gentleness in the disposition of this beautiful animal that is quite in harmony with the delicacy of its form. It approaches you with a timid, crouching fondness, to be daunted by a look, unless you would encourage it to rapture by a word, and then,—Oh! the fantastical gambols—the kangaroo-like jumps, the wild careering of its three-league legs, vainly striving for play in a narrow circle round you!—if it should not happen to prefer, which it often does, a kiss, placing its paws upon your shoulders, and bringing you nose to nose, were you as tall as the Irish giant. It is an interesting sight to see them in the field, before they are uncoupled for the course, all their energies alive and struggling for action. I have noticed them particularly when sitting upon their haunches, so tall and so prim—their fore-legs stiffened out, and lifting them up like two slender columns—their necks arched, their ears erect, and their eyes eagerly following the distant horsemen. If a greyhound were to *sit* for its portrait, this should be the moment. No man of any manners would think of speaking to a

greyhound as he would to any other dog: even their rude grooms think it necessary to temper their familiarity to them with a select language, and a tone of becoming softness. "What, Miss Sweetlips!" I heard a fellow say to a cream-coloured, satin-skinned lady, that kept whining and fretting, as she sat perked up beside him; "are *you* for a hare this morning—and would *you* foul this fine nose of yours with blood? eh! you baggage?"—just as one might notice some pretty wickedness in a capricious beauty in petticoats. Blood has an ill sound; but there is nothing fierce or ravenous about them, nevertheless—nothing beyond a sprightly animation—a hunter's spirit, that rejoices rather in the hills and free air, and the chase, than thirsts for slaughter. Their thin bodies are exceedingly susceptible of cold, and, in a state of inaction, cannot resist the sharpness of the winter's wind without a convulsive shuddering. Some sportsmen, with not more tenderness than is decent, provide them with body-cloths, in which they are enveloped till it is their turn to run; and they of coarser feelings, who might laugh at the notion of supplying the pretty creatures with their pelisses, should, at least, place them, till they are wanted, under the lee of a hedge or a cornstack, or

any shelter that might be at hand. They would run the better for such care, they may depend upon it.

As the greyhound has no gift of smell, and can hunt only in view of his game, it is desirable, as will occur to my most sedentary reader, to provide a hare for him at some distance from any cover, so that he may have free scope for a trial of his speed. The hare seems to be at once aware of the nature of her enemy, and that she is safe as long as she is concealed; for if you dislodge her from a thicket, she will not take to a far flight, but slip into some other part of the cover, and there lie quiet, with an audacity which she would not think of venturing upon, with the keen-nosed harriers at her heels. The furze is scattered in large patches about the downs; but there are extensive spaces of clear turf, with here and there a farm, surrounded by some acres of land in tillage; and these are the best places for your game. The hares which are bold enough to leave their covers generally seek out the ploughed land, choosing sheltered seats among the furrows, where they will sit perfectly still for a whole day, never voluntarily stirring till night allows them to move and feed with security. The horsemen, six

or eight, it may be, range themselves in an open file, and pace slowly over the field, each looking sharp over his allotted space, so that not an inch of ground escapes examination. The hare cowers down so close, and is so much of the colour of the ground, that it requires an eye of some experience to detect one on her seat. The dogs (a couple only) contribute no aid to this preparatory service of starting the game; but follow the horses, quiet vacant and passive, till the view holla is given, and the hare is in motion before them. The greyhound, in a state of nature, would, if hares were to be its only food, have little chance of growing fat. With a powerless nose, and rather a dull eye, it will pass within a yard of a hare on her seat, and not observe her. With such defects on his part, added to the defensive arts with which nature has supplied his prey, his single endowment of speed would scarcely, one should imagine, preserve him from famine. The mouse has a name for excessive lying still, but it is outdone in this particular, I fancy, by the hare, who sagaciously apprehending how much her lightest movement might assist the eyes of her seekers, lies like a clod on the ground; as danger approaches, she still maintains, if I may say so, her presence of

mind; the sight of the hounds almost upon her, and the shouts of the men, cannot startle her into indiscretion. To such an extremity will she try this scheme of evasion, that you are obliged to go up to her, and positively push her from her seat; and then, the spell once broken, away she flits, bounding over the ground like a cricket-ball; the cry is given; the hounds see her and pursue—they draw near—they are upon her—they have her—no, she turns, and they overshoot her—now again—the black dog!—she must die—no—there was a "fling off!"—she heads them again—away, puss—now, *Mellish*, now, my boy—the dogs for a hundred—stay—yes—she's down—no—I see her—no—yes—she leaves them—she gains her cover—she is safe.

Three minutes are about the duration of an ordinary course, during which, if short, the interest of the spectator is always on the strain, on extremest tip-toe—a point of agitation, which they who have seen "neck and neck" on a race-course will readily appreciate. It is beautiful to see the antagonist powers and resources with which nature has supplied the hare; in her apparently unequal contest with the surpassing speed of her pursuers. They very soon overtake her at the first start; but at the moment

when they spring forward to seize her, she darts away to the right or left, with the quickness of lightning, and is twenty yards away from them before they can retract their long legs, and level at her again; a few seconds may bring them to her; but as she runs before them, she keeps tossing and throwing herself from them in a marvellous manner, continually escaping from their open mouths by some sudden movement, which the eye can scarcely follow; yet, amidst all her distractions, never forgetting her main object; but, after every shift and double, still pointing to her cover. A more terrifying struggle than she goes through cannot be imagined. With the harriers she has time and respites; but here she is, during the whole run, in the very presence of death; the dogs touch her, run over her—the sound of their panting is never out of her ears, and allows her not the pause of a moment for a hope of deliverance. An idea may be formed of the success with which the little animal exerts herself in this desperate conflict, from the fact, that in a whole day's coursing, at which I was present, with twelve couple of dogs, each couple of which had, at least, one fair course, only three hares were killed.

The greyhounds have no notion of stopping at the cover when they see the hare enter; but, still confident in their legs, keep sweeping on, till the continued non-appearance of their game checks their spirit, when they stand staring about them in a stupid puzzle, as if wondering how they should possibly have been left behind. Though quite without resource, they will stand for a long time before they give up all hope, in defiance of whistling and hallooing; till at last, with many a lingering look they drag themselves away, and return at a snail's space, dispirited and abashed, to their keepers. There are greyhounds who are criminal enough, when the hare is put up, not to follow her, but to repair with all haste at once to her cover, and there wait to receive her. This is called "running cunning," and is not considered fair play —fair enough, perhaps, as between the dogs and the hare, but a direct fraud against the amusement of the sportsmen.

Coursing altogether is but a dull business. The actual run is a scene of very anxious interest; but, the want of variety and continuous action in the sport makes it very tiresome to those who have followed the harriers or the fox-hounds. There is

not exercise enough to keep the blood in motion: the game lies entirely between the dogs and the hare, stripped of the great attraction of all hunting—the competition of horses and riders. I have seen the sport in some perfection too; our downs having been visited the other day by a grand party from London, profound breeders, who came down with a cart-load of dogs, on purpose to prove to us that we in the country here know nothing about a greyhound. Willing to reap all sorts of profit from their dogs, they "backed" them with certain sums against any booby mongrels that we could bring against them. The farmers, however, with all their inexperience, contrived to win all the money. The dogs of the Londoners, not to bear malice, were of a fine breed, and in the highest condition; but being accustomed to run in a level country, they could not contend against our long hills, and the vigour and activity of the hares bred upon them. These persons are looked upon in the country rather in the light of dog-fanciers than sportsmen. Their half-crown bets are very town-bred, and betray a spirit that has nothing to do with the true inspiration of the field. They had one individual with them whom I cannot refrain from mentioning a

little more at length—a Cockney all over—who was present at a hunt, on this occasion, for the first time in his life. I shall never forget him, I hope. His dress was charmingly characteristical, and, without other introduction, expounded him to every one in a moment. The day was bitterly cold; and all of us, save this stranger, were buttoned up to the chins in good fear-nought drab coats, that effectually kept out the weather, and looked as if they did so. The appearance was altogether comfortable, and quite in season. The Cockney appeared in a green coat, puffed and puckered at the shoulders—very short, with the skirts pared away into a delicate swallow-tail, exposing more than his hips behind—a slight linen waistcoat without buttons, or with only three or four, the space between the stomach and neck opening freely, to give egress to a flaunting frill—tight, white, cotton breeches (I speak the bare truth)—korseymere leggings—*pumpish* looking shoes—and a fur cap. The costume surely was perfect. He was, as may be supposed, very speedily penetrated bone-deep by the cold, though, to do him justice, he made no complaint, except by the chattering of his teeth, and certain involuntary and St. Vitus-like movements that would be taking

place now and then in various parts of his body. There was nothing very observable in his mode of riding, only that he turned his knees and toes out like a dancing-master, by which act he had a very loose, detached seat; and, as he made little use of his stirrups, was shot up to a prodigious height from his saddle, at every step of his horse—his white breeches appearing to descend and rebound in the manner of a piece of India rubber. Of course he was the general butt of the company, who all prepared, in the same jovial spirit, to make the most of the unexpected rarity that the chances of the morning had dropped amongst them. When the hare was put up, "Let the gentleman holla," they exclaimed—and forthwith he uttered a cry such as hound never heard: "Let the gentleman put her up," it was next proposed; and he proceeded to frighten away the hare, waving a pocket handkerchief, and crying, *huish! huish!* as an old woman repels a goose: "Let the gentleman ride—ride, sir, ride,"—and away he went—bump—bump—over the startled hills, all alone—followed only by shouts of laughter, himself the game—the view—the whole hunt of the day. It was not long before he seemed to perceive that he was entertaining the

lookers-on; and he bore his exposure with a cheerfulness and good-humour which richly deserved a warmer pair of breeches. He became, at length, quite altered by the cold: his face, which, for some time, had preserved a tolerable paleness, now turned to blue; he positively looked less, and was in a course, it seemed, of disappearing altogether: yet he was still warm of heart—manfully left his little coat unbuttoned, and kept his frill and toes out with as much formality as on his first appearance. When we had been out about five hours, the poor fellow came up to me with his watch in his hand, and, with a voice that could scarcely force its way through his stiffened lips, observed, "Half an hour's more *sport*, and then it will be dark." He wished me to understand that he regretted this approaching deliverance, which, in my judgment, very nearly concerned his life. I took no part, I beg to say, in the common conspiracy against him. I had my irresistible sense of his preposterousness, and many a rich smile at all his *noodling* ways; but I manifested no sign, I trust, that could in any way be offensive to him. I had much talk with him; and, as I have exposed his weak points, I think it but fair to say that I found in him a great deal of in-

telligence, apart from any relation to his saddle, together with a kindness and urbanity (no uncommon qualities in Cockneyism, let them laugh at it as they please) which would have hesitated, I think, on any provocation, to have wounded the feelings of those who had been so merry at his expense. Even as a sportsman, he had qualities which might have redeemed him from contempt. I defend not his practice in putting up a hare; but there was no lack of spirit and moral courage in the man; and he proved it under a course of protracted suffering, which I truly believe would have daunted any or all of the ruddy, brawny, bull-headed persons, who, in their greater conceit and warmer coats, had laughed at him so unsparingly. He could have had no interest in the sport, except what it was his bitter fortune to be obliged to affect; he was a mere mark for ridicule and a piercing wind; yet I am convinced that he would have sat and perished in his saddle, rather than have uttered a murmur;—an instance of Cockney-heroism, which all Tooley-street surely may be proud of.

FOX-HUNTING.

As a single pack of fox-hounds perform their regular rounds through the county, for the benefit

of all subscribing 'squires, they of course visit us only in our turn; and according to the rarity of their appearance is the sensation that they produce. The news travels from farm to farm, a week beforehand; while contradictory reports take wing, published no one knows how, for the sole purpose, it should seem, of tormenting and trifling with the public anxiety. On the appointed day, the "earths" (certain holes in which the politic fox is prone to hide) are stopped; the shepherds have orders to keep their dogs in hand; the sheep, and such vermin, are removed; and every preparation is made to give full effect to the coming achievement. By ten o'clock the downs are all alive; little detachments of horse are assembling from all points; some looming up in more than their just dimensions on the misty hills; others seen only as dim specks, in the distance, and all streaming on towards headquarters. And there are the hounds—there—something white, don't you see? glancing amongst the furze; and here come the huntsman and the whipper-in, in their scarlet coats and velvet caps; Gad! but our poor farmers' hunt must not be talked of on this day—and hark! the horn:—though that is an instrument of no manner of

use; and as the huntsman applies it hastily to his mouth once or twice only in the day, to produce some miserable syncope-passage—a little asthmatic, broken, bleating; it has about as much melody as meaning in it.

The muster may amount to fifty horsemen, of whom twenty may be in red coats—the flower of the field, conspicuous alike for the gaudiness of their dress, the beauty and true hunter-look of their horses, and the completeness of all their appointments. A few, even among the gentlemen, do not affect scarlet, such as the apothecary and the parson, with two or three grey-headed Nimrods, who, though out of uniform, are not to be mistaken from any distance, being made out to be fox-hunters as soon as they are made out to be any thing. Next in rank come the farmers, a jolly set, all for straight-forward work and "no nonsense;" lower down are a couple of butchers, beef-red, and blue-frocked; lower still an itinerant horse-dealer on his *take-in*; and last, and lowest, a stranger with a huge shawl-patterned neckcloth, whom nobody knows, whence he came, or what he can be; a dubious figure, half jockey, half highwayman, mounted on his bit of blood, which can scarcely

stand, you see, but which, he assures you, is "a devil to go." A rabble rout of people on foot serve to swell the numbers and noise.

An eye, not quite absorbed by the business of the day, may fall upon some rather grotesque figures, considered in their pretensions to the honours of the chase. I remember one, whom I used to regard with animated wonder, a portly piece of corpulency, whose diameters, from head to foot, and from back to front, must have been nearly equal—a round of beef on horseback. His cubical legs, which scarcely reached below the flaps of his saddle, were made for any thing but clinging, and afforded no counter weight to the preponderating tonnage of his upper works; so that, at every movement and stop of his horse, he had a fearful proclivity to topple over—reminding me of those little cork tumblers with leaden heels, which *will* fall on their feet; only that this fox-hunter was governed by a *pollarity* of his own, his tendency being to settle or gravitate on his head. Contrasted with this spherical gentleman, you might see a lean, lathy figure—nothing but length,—growing up from his saddle like a May-pole, but kept firm by proportionate legs, straightened out like a pair of open compasses, and pegging

him down to his stirrups. A horse might as well attempt to dislodge his skin as a rider of this make. There was another individual, whom I always (for he was a constant attendant) took peculiar interest in; an invalid too obviously, though full of the *esprit du corps*; wearing only one coat like his neighbours, and unconscious, I sincerely hope, that I counted the edges of four waistcoats beneath it. He was miserably crippled in one leg, and rode only with one stirrup; yet he trusted this ill-conditioned frame of his on a most alarming horse, that looked as if just taken up from a winter's riot on a common. The attendance of a person like this speaks much for the attractions of hunting: if such a one can find his morning's account in it, what must it be to the strong and healthy?

When the fox-hounds pay us a visit, we generally meet at the same place, Firle Hill, the loftiest land in this part of Sussex, and very favourable to the scenery of the hunt, in the command which it gives of a magnificent prospect over nearly the whole country. At the bottom of this hill, which is almost as steep as a wall, is a young plantation, the favourite retreat of the fox, and into this the hounds are let loose, and left, with the co-operation of the

huntsman and the whipper-in, to ferret him out, while the gentlemen stand aloof and look on. This is the most picturesque scene of the whole hunt; an artist would go no farther. The horsemen are scattered in groups along the edge of the hill, of all colours and conditions; some lolling in their saddles, and out of their stirrups; others pacing about on foot; with here and there a *figure*, studying attitude as well as ease, one leg crossing the other and resting on the toe, and one arm encircling the neck of his horse, just as we see it at the *Exhibition* in Somerset House; not to forget the horses, the patient hacks of the farmers, face to face, dozing and nodding, and the hunters of mettle pawing and prancing, or showing off their noble forms like statues against the sky. While these easy and social parties are gossiping on the hill-top, news of the business that is going on below reaches the ear from time to time, in the baying of the dogs, and the cheering of the huntsman; every sound, as it strikes against the hollowed front of the hill, swelling out into a loud report, which penetrates far and wide into the unseen recesses of the wood, and conveys a notion of savage loneliness and vacancy. This part of the sport is often rather tediously

protracted, if tediousness can be imputed to two hours of total inactivity, which must be sometimes endured, before the fox can be dislodged from his cover. Perfectly alive to the perils which await him without, his slyship, though he may occasionally show himself to reconnoitre, has no notion of travelling, as long as he has a stratagem left, which can secure him the reprieve of a minute at home. At length, baited and worried out of all his cunning and corners, he comes forth in earnest, and fairly trusts his life to his legs. The fox is a beautiful animal, though he certainly carries about him, in his figure, and in all his gestures and motions, very marked signs of that lax morality, that wiliness and treachery, which have gained him a name of infamy through the world. His long low body, with perfect stillness, and with no visible action proportioned to the actual swiftness of his pace, steals along the ground, like a thief as he is, to be hooted at, and hissed, and execrated, as he runs; and, finally, to die without pity, a just atonement to the sheep-fold and the hen-roost.

As the fox breaks away, *tally-ho!* resounds through the air—tremendous warning,—the last order—the "*England expects that every man will*

do his duty." If beating up the cover is the most picturesque scene of the hunt, this is its highest point of excitement—the instant of choking, tremulous expectation, immediately before action—to be likened to nothing, as any fox-hunter will tell you, but the few moments that precede going into battle. The dismounted have vaulted into their saddles, the loungers have pulled up their bridles, and sent their legs to their quarters—all is ready—intensely ready—when the collected hounds, in full cry, come maddening up the hill, the scent breast-high before them—onward they go; and follows, like a thunder-clap, the wild, tumultuary charge—the brush or a broken neck—*Tally-ho!*

I have little more to say. The business of the field has four hours of preparation for one of action; and even so it must be with my narrative. Of the fifty horsemen who joined in the first charge, about six, perhaps, may ride through the chase within sight of the dogs, whom it is their destiny to follow without stop or question; here are no short cuts, no calculation; "follow my leader" is their law, over hill and hollow, through mud and water, brake and briar, with as little discrimination, on their part, as if they were moving at the mercy of the wind. Of

the remainder of the company, two-thirds are in some ten minutes "thrown out," lost past help and hope; the rest survive a little longer; but, one after another, are *lurched* at last, though they may still continue to push on, under a sort of necessity of proceeding, and rewarded occasionally, if they have luck, by something like *intelligence*—a respectable report—so that they may sleep at night with a pretty near guess as to the part of the county that may have been the scene of the death. I have been supposing, that the fox runs gallantly twenty or thirty miles to his end; but he may happen, in no long time after starting, to "take earth," *Anglicè*, get into a hole, and put the huntsman to an hour's toil before he can be dug out, and induced to take air. Such a check gives the gentlemen behind time to rally and come up, and the business begins again. And this is fox-hunting; in my estimation, not comparable, as an amusement, with hare-hunting, if company, and a friendly coalition of powers and purposes, with a full observation of the actions of the dogs and their game, be, as I take them to be, the agreeable circumstances of hunting. It is mere riding—post-boy's work. There is getting the brush indeed; but then, like the great prize in the

lottery, only one can get it. I have the general voice against me. Fox-hunters despise the harriers; there is not speed enough with them, they say; and this is the true secret of their preference: there is no contest of riders—no room for horse-pride, the loftiest pride, I fancy, that is.

In my account of these sports, I know not that I have made out any ground for the enthusiasm with which they are pursued. It is necessary, perhaps, to be present to understand this. At all events, as incidental to a morning's ride, hunting may be allowed to be a pleasing diversion. Every body must have felt sometimes the dulness of taking exercise only for its own sake: a hunt gives an object—something to follow; and for my part, with three or four bold fellows in company, I should not care if it were a pig.

A SHIPWRECK.

On the 26th of last November, late in the day, a solitary vessel was discovered off ———, on the coast of Sussex, whose broad, round, and elevated bows and stern bespoke her plainly to be Dutch. She was loitering on the waters, as these Dutch vessels are apt to do, while her general movements and conduct, in relation to the shore under her lee, the state of the tide, and the coming night, indicated the doubts and embarrassments of a stranger. She was an object of deep interest to a little group of fishermen, assembled at their ordinary evening council at the capstan, and the opinion among them was, that evil awaited her. The appearances of the weather were fearful: the sky was foul with vapour, and the sun, low in the west, stood staring through the mist with a pale, rayless, and portentous face, that told of approaching danger and disaster. There was little wind, but the sea roared loudly, and came

rolling in with an agitated swell, which, old John Read remarked, denoted that the gale was already up to windward, and would soon be upon us. He was right; before dark it blew a storm, and the last time the stranger-ship was seen from the land afloat, she was bending down to her beam ends under a press of sail, doing her utmost to gain an offing, and weather Beachy Head. It was not to be. At ten o'clock, and at about high-water, the wind blowing dismally, and a monstrous sea on, she came ashore, running nearly close up under the lofty chalk cliffs, half a mile east of ———. The crew were speedily relieved from all apprehensions about their safety, by the retiring of the tide, when all hands on board combined with all ———, in the anxious labour of saving what they could of the cargo, before the coming on of the next flood. The vessel proved to be De Jonge Nicolaas, of two hundred tons burthen, laden with wine and brandy from Cette, and bound to Amsterdam.

Dutch ships bear a reasonable resemblance to Dutch men, and are to the ships of most other nations, what dull, plodding, steady men are to men of genius and quick passions. They sail slowly and heavily, but they are safe sea-boats, and derive

many and great advantages, in the various vicissitudes of a voyage, from the peculiarities of mould and construction, which will not allow them to be swift and lively. As they draw very little water, they drift away broadside to leeward when sailing near the wind; and for their head-way, their bows are about as well formed for cutting through the water as their broadsides. Thus appointed, the Dutchman, in a fleet of all flags, will inevitably bring up the rear; but he bears this distinction in a spirit of quietism that keeps his ship quite in countenance; and replies to your ridicule by letting you know that he can walk his forecastle and quarter-deck in a gale with dry shoes, while you shall be plunging your fine front bowsprit-under,—or can make a small harbour, or ground on the main and step ashore, while you must keep the sea, or strike in deep water and be drowned. To fit your ships rather for encountering the shore than the sea, is not in the highest spirit of enterprise; but we must remember, that if, under such a system of prudential preparation, Columbus had not discovered America, Perouse, perhaps, had not been lost. The difference, after all, is only as between despatch and delay. The Dutch do all, or are in a course of

doing all, that other nations do; and as nothing is denied to perseverance, they will, before doomsday, do all that is to be done. It is not their way to push themselves forwards into the foremost ranks, as discoverers and inventors; yet they are not idle; they are always following, and, only let them choose their own century, they will not always be behind. If they are to act extempore, you must at least give them time.

I went forth at daylight to see the unfortunate Nicolaas, and was just in time to witness her last battle with sea and storm, and her final overthrow. I have often thought, that a gibbet on the beach at ——— would make it, as a picture of desolation, quite complete. An effect of as much force, perhaps, was supplied by the masts and tattered rigging of the wreck, which were just distinguishable through the mist of the surf, and combining with the natural bleakness and dreariness of the place, gave a depth of meaning to the gloom of a black November morning, which went at once to the heart. The gale had abated considerably, but it had left its signs. Vast, lowering, bloated clouds, full of wrath and mischief, darkened the sky; and the sea, swollen by a spring flood, was bordered to

the distance of half a mile from the shore with tiers of hurrying, foaming, crashing breakers, on the verge of which the devoted ship stood, like a criminal before his executioners. She had as yet suffered no material damage visibly, and looked altogether so sound and compact, that there were some hopes and more fears that she might live through the battery of another flood, and, if more moderate weather should succeed before night, be got afloat again, and even (who could tell?) show her old hull in Amsterdam once more. An unprejudiced spectator, however, could scarcely observe the character and action of the sea that was rapidly advancing, and calculate upon any other result than her destruction.

A great concourse of people from the neighbouring villages and farms had been brought to the spot by tidings of the accident; shopkeepers, great and small; artisans, high and low; farmers, ploughmen, shepherds, and fishermen—everybody, and his wife and children too—all of whom conceived that they had, at least, a contingent interest in the vessel and her rich contents. No one could possibly stay at home on so tempting an occasion. Withered and forgotten old women, not seen abroad twice in a

twelvemonth, emerged into life, and were out in the world again; mothers with infants in their arms, and large families clinging to their aprons—veteran paupers from the poor-house, stumping about on sticks and crutches—all found time, and strength, and resolution, enough, to join the crowd, on this great day of invitation. The inhabitants of the coast look upon a wreck as a largess of the elements, which it would be almost a sin not to receive with grateful alacrity. They sally out to enjoy the good things provided for them by such a visitation, with precisely the same sense of general right and welcome, as they might do, were it to please the skies to rain bread, and cheese, and beer.

I followed the various throng up to the top of the cliff,—a smooth-shaven, perpendicular precipice, from whence we had a clear view of the vessel, lying at the depth of a hundred and fifty feet beneath us, and heard, or thought we heard, the cracking of her planks and timbers, and could note the effect of every wave that burst over her, through the whole progress of her ruin. How magnified in our apprehension was the mightiness of the ocean by the interposition of this victim, which it was destroying before our eyes! As the heavy, beetling seas

came roaring on to the attack, they seemed, in our fancies, to be raging with a savage joy, like monsters over their prey. It was like looking upon wild beasts at feeding-time. I could not help feeling, as the vessel from time to time showed her shattered deck through the parting foam, a sort of pity and sympathy for her, as though she had been, not a thing of wood and iron only, but of life and sensation; and the same sentiment was obviously shared by the crowd about me—a momentary mercy—a "natural tear"—prevailing over the selfishness of their final hopes and wishes. It was not the loss of property that any body felt or cared for: it was the ship—the Nicolaas—that we deplored, the friend and companion of man, his home and helpmate, through many a day of danger and distress, now cast forth to perish without a hand to aid her. "Poor thing!" said a woman near me; "Lord help her!" drawled out another. There were four or five strangers present, heavy, ruddy, fat-faced men, bulkily clothed in Flushing jackets and trowsers, who were remarkable among the anxious crowd, as preserving countenances untouched by the lightest sign of curiosity or disturbance. Sleep might have closed their eyes, but could scarcely have added to

the calmness and repose of their looks. These were Dutchmen, the crew of the vessel—and what was it all to them? They had their pipes; and if they smoked on the top of a cliff in Sussex, on board the Nicolaas, or on the borders of one of their own dikes—where was the mighty difference?"

After the vessel had been exposed for about half an hour to the full range of the sea, her masts, loosened from the bottom, and carrying all before them, descended slowly, and with a crashing noise, to the water. This was a fatal signal: the next sea completed her destruction at a blow; it struck her, and she disappeared, scattered into fragments, like a cask with the hoops knocked off; no vestige of her whole bulk being again visible, except now and then a timber-head, sticking up like a black post in the hollow of a sea. At this final act of the catastrophe I looked up wistfully into the face of one of the Dutchmen, shook my head, and so, in my best Dutch, told him how sincerely I condoled with him. He evidently understood me, for he took his pipe from his mouth—ejected a cataract of saliva over his shoulder—shook out the ashes—rammed down the remaining charge with a tawny, broken-nailed thumb—replaced the pipe between his teeth—blew

out a cloud of smoke with three or four sharp, sudden, puffs—found all right—and thereupon looked, not as if the Nicolaas was not, but as if she had never been. I quite hated the fellow for his barbarous resignation. He and his shipmates, with mute sobriety, now returned to the town, where they at once seemed as used to the place, and as little moved and wondering, as the posts. These are your men for troublesome times: a revolution that moved them would move the hills. An earthquake, nothing less, could put them out of their way.

On the ebbing of the tide, there was "a rush," as at the opening of the doors at the theatre, for good places or prizes under the cliffs, and we immediately found ourselves amidst the ruinous litter of the wreck. No one asked now—where is she?—She was every where. I never saw a vessel in so short a time so completely broken up. To the extent of a mile and a half, the beach directly under the cliff was strewed, without the clear space of a yard, with her fragments and her cargo. A person not familiar with such sights would have supposed that here were materials for a dozen ships; and the pipes of wine, three hundred in number, lying in clusters of

four and five, as far as the eye could see, them along the beach, seemed cargo enough to have filled them. A little wreck, as they say of a little blood, makes a great show; and in a state of dispersion gives a very deceitful account to the eye of its actual quantity.

As there were no lives to be lost or saved, it may be imagined that, as a spectacle, the mere rubbish of broken beams and timbers must have been dull and insignificant. But this was by no means the case. A wreck, as a sign only of the power and danger of the sea, is always an impressive sight; and, though the crew may have been only Dutchmen, is full of associations connected with human interests, which will not allow us to look upon it without emotion. The ruins of a house, destroyed by fire, are always an object of earnest curiosity; we gaze anxiously amongst the blackened ruins upon every trace of our old acquaintance, rooms, and their furniture; a stove and a poker, a bit of papered wall, or any such familiar images of domestic comfort and security, become full of a deep and melancholy interest. It is the same with a wreck: every poor cast-away plank has its story—every remnant of deck and cabin something to say

in its desolation, that may stop a man for a moment to think and to sigh. I observed the cook's huge black boiler, full of sand, pebbles, and sea-weed, lying in dismal companionship with the vessel's figure-head, a goggle-eyed gentleman with flowing locks and a three-cornered hat, radiant all over with green and gold. Ah! what did all this coxcombry avail him now? Pieces of rope and ragged canvas, bedding, coats, boxes, lay jumbled together with the splintered fragments of the ship amongst the beach and weeds; a blanket stuck upon the jagged points of a broken mast—here and there was a *drowned* hat and a shoe, not to forget a pair of blue breeches, of the true Batavian mould, pasted out in full dimensions against the white face of a chalk rock,—a striking example of the mixed ludicrous and pathetic.

I had wandered about for an hour, keeping at a distance from the people and their noise, that I might enjoy, if I may say so, the natural circumstances of the scene without disturbance; and was on my return, when I met a man lustily singing out a jovial song, tumbling about, and snapping his fingers with an emphasis that clearly showed he cared not a fig for the world. Such manners pro-

duced in me an unpleasant revulsion of feeling, for they certainly were not in harmony with dreadful precipices, the awful voice of the sea, and the mournful memorials of its fury that lay in my path. Ay (said I to myself), this rascal has been moralizing for his part over the contents of one of the wine-casks, having eluded, no doubt, the vigilance of the guards. Presently I met another exactly in the same plight; and "a third, whose air was like the former;" till, on rounding a projecting point of rock, I had the whole company again before me—all revolutionized since I had last seen them, and brought by the same means to the same likeness. The devil could not have added a more artful bait to the ordinary temptations of a wreck than this provoking cargo. It was irresistible: flesh and blood, in Sussex at least, literally could not stand against it. I never saw drunkenness on such a scale, or in such variety before. One has seen at a fair considerable numbers very fully drunk, but still they were the exceptions—the minority; and served rather, like the red flowers in a corn-field, to diversify the crowd, than to mark its general character and condition. Here, on the contrary, in a multitude of four or five hundred people, the

sober man was the rarity, and so much so, that, like one bonnet in the "pit," he was quite lost in the reeling tumult by which he was surrounded. The whole history of getting drunk was here exhibited at one point of time; from the earliest symptoms of innovation, up all the steps to the very top of the ascending flight—and then down again on the other side, lower and lower, even to the bottom—the level "dead drunk." The chattering, the laughing, the singing, the bawling, the jigging, the quarrelling, the challenging, the fighting, the staring, the silent, the sulky, the sentimental, the rolling, the falling, the fallen—were all confounded together, and composed certainly as wild a set of figures for a picture of the sea-beach at noonday as the most riotous imagination could desire. You might go through all Cook's Voyages, I fancy, and not find for it a worthy companion-piece. The women confined themselves principally to dancing and singing, clamorously beset by a host of squalling children—drunk too, poor little sufferers; the boys, of all sizes, were kicking one another's hats into the sea, pulling off the women's caps, huzzaing at a fight, or shouting and laughing at some methodistical old beldame, who would be

preaching in her cups; while the men, every one who was not absolutely *felo de se*, and quiet at his length, were at work—or enacting every extravagance of Bedlamites, as they played at rolling casks into carts. And were there no superintendants to check such doings? Oh! yes—fifty, if there was one; but, somehow or other, these men of authority were, of all the persons on their legs, the most helplessly drunk; having arms in their hands, it appeared to me, for no other purpose, but that they might themselves drink without stint or question. At the top of every loaded cart that moved away, you beheld one of these "safe-conducts," an officer they called him, *lolloping* about with a drawn sword, and a face of solemn incompetency, his whole surviving powers being insufficient for the maintenance of his seat, let alone his dignity, for any two minutes of his journey. We had half a dozen dragoons too, galloping along the beach, and slashing the air with their sabres, and rolling about in their saddles, with a freedom that must have ended in twenty tumbles, had they been any thing less than drunk—and dragoons. There were still higher powers, even gaugers and supervisors, who had been equally open to the seductions of the

"rosy god." The rabble had accomplished their sly potations in holes and corners, with a bladder, a hat, or a shoe, for a goblet; but, with the magistracy, all was done openly and becomingly—such are the advantages of authority.

In the course of my ramble, I joined a little group who had assembled round a mighty cask, and taken it into their heads that it was necessary they should pronounce upon the nature of its contents. A large can, holding some quarts by way of sample, was filled and handed over to the chief man, already much *disguised*, though capable of much more. He collected himself, as a collector should, on receiving the rich measure, swallowed a mouthful, and continued for a minute deliberately smacking his lips, with his head declined a little, and his eyes fixed in a profound, calculating, judicial stare; then another mouthful, with smacking as before, and another, and another,—till, tired of this dribbling and doubting, he determined to have a fair taste at once; and, with the help of both hands, began gulping down a horse-like draught, which lasted as long as his breath, when the can, splashing and swashing, was redeemed from his unsteady grasp, and with a crapulous hiccup, he an-

nounced that it was—"port; de—de—decidedly port." The can was then filled and emptied again and again, as it performed its rounds among the whole jury of inquisitors, who came to the same verdict, that it could be nothing but port, and all "for the benefit of the underwriters."

There was one cask at a considerable distance from the rest, which I found under the special charge of a sailor belonging to the *Preventive* Service, who, remote from the general tumult, was abiding here "in single blessedness," about as happy and helpless as it is in the power of wine to make a man. Not knowing with what command I might be commissioned, he thought it necessary, on seeing me, to put on a grave, superintending face; and, as he stood *minuting* before the cask, with a cutlass in his hand, and the brass knob of a huge pistol staring out from his breast, he formed altogether the most ludicrously contradictory figure I ever beheld. "What cheer, mate, what cheer?" said I: "All's well," said he; and immediately fell flat upon his back. Now, thought I, he must certainly acknowledge his delinquency: but no; after much uncalled-for plunging and sprawling, for which he damned himself soundly, he contrived to

bring himself to a perpendicular again, and, to my amazement, fixed upon me the same official, responsible face, as before, which would have me to know, that he was as sober as a judge. I could resist the appeal no longer, but burst out into a loud laugh, in which the poor fellow at last very cordially joined me; though the approach of his commanding officer soon spoiled the joke, and I left him to authenticate his temperance with what success he might.

There were two hundred casks of wine, as they called it, saved, and of these, it was in due time discovered, there was not a single one which had not been tapped and *tasted*. It was three days before the whole cargo was deposited in a storehouse; and though, after the first day, it was protected against any general violence, there were still such opportunities of indulgence through the milkiness, or *wininess*, rather, of the sentinels, that not a man in the town was quite himself, as long as there was a cask left. They began early; there is nothing like it. I met many most despotically drunk before sun-rise; which, indeed, is not to be wondered at, when we consider that they had been drinking all night. Cold, sour, turbid wine, drunk

out of a rusty tin can, in the open air, at seven o'clock, on a wet morning, in November! How I envy them their stomachs! Some bruised heads, and a few broken legs, were among the results of this Bacchanalian jollity; and black eyes, fist-made, are to this hour still traceable in their last livery of blue and yellow.

It had occurred to me on the first day of the revels, as I looked upon so many senseless carcasses, lying like corpses on the strand, that darkness and the flowing tide might bring some of them into peril, from which they were little in a condition to escape; and had it not been for the exertions of sisters almost sober, and wives only half-drunk, it might have proved a sad day for ——— indeed. As it was, only one fatal accident occurred.

A dragoon, a fine young man, with his horse, was found drowned on the following morning, by some mischance or misconduct which nobody could explain. He was observed late in the night quite frantic with drink, and, unfortunately, the spectators themselves were too much elevated for thoughts of danger or precaution. By what strange mysterious ties is our death sometimes related to events, remote, one might have thought, from all possible

connexion with it! I had seen this man, on the evening when the vessel first appeared, talking with some of his comrades about her distress; and he retired with them, no doubt, to his snug quarters, blessing himself in his enjoyments and security. His story was plain and intelligible enough when it was all over; but how inconceivable would he have thought it, had he been told, at the moment when he was pitying the labouring ship, that she would bring death to only one—and that the one would be himself!

I should be happy to find out some grounds of excuse, or palliation at least, for the spirit of plunder that prevails on our coasts, and is so general, indeed, that it may almost be imputed to us as a national reproach. At no very distant period, the business of "wrecking" was often combined with acts of merciless violence and ferocity, that the Cossacks or the Malays might have been ashamed to acknowledge. People were not then satisfied with robbing the ship, but would fall upon the unfortunate crew, carry off their little property, tear their clothes from their backs, and, if they resisted, knock them on the head. Such barbarities are now, thank God, seldom heard of. I have witnessed

many shipwrecks on various parts of the coast, but certainly never saw ill-usage or inhumanity of any kind extended towards the crews. On the contrary, the first consideration, with all denominations of people, even those who would be most forward to plunder when the season came, was invariably to make every effort in their power for the preservation of lives. In this generous labour, which is engaged in without a thought of reward, I have seen so many examples of the noblest courage and self-devotedness on the part of the "rogues and vagrants" of the sea-side, that I am almost willing to forgive them the ordinary trespasses of their trade. As the Reviewer said of Lord Byron's Corsair, they have "every virtue under heaven except common honesty." It is the ship and her cargo alone that they regard with hostility; and even these, in the present improved state of feeling on such subjects, are not condemned till they have had, what is considered, a fair trial. As long as a vessel holds together, and can be called a ship, they admit that it fairly belongs to its proprietors; but as soon as it is broken up and scattered in fragments along the shore, it is nothing—its identity is gone for ever. In this state of dissolution, they consider it as at

once emancipated from all exclusive claims of ownership, and cast, beyond all recognized boundaries of law and right, upon some waste element, as it were, or scramble-land, open to any adventurer who fears not the sea and surf. They do not feel that plunder in such a case is chargeable with any degree of cruelty and injustice: the sea, they say, has done all the mischief; we only take what it pleases to send us; and, whether it be lobsters and flat-fish, or pieces of plank and coils of rope, we hold ourselves equally innocent. You might tell them, that a considerable part of a wreck might be collected for the benefit of the owners; but you cannot tell them what part; and, as they know that a considerable proportion of it is likely to be swept away by the sea, they choose to think that all which they save is justly made their own. A certain quantity may or may not be recovered—nothing can be more doubtful—and in the meantime, the whole lies in so loose a state, so unnoticed and unguarded, so much in short like something lost, that they cannot help believing that it belongs to any body who will stoop to pick it up. "We found it," they say, "and there can be no harm in that." You may tell them too, that if there is no other owner, the lord

of the manor has the first turn; but the reasonableness of his priority is quite beyond their comprehension, and, to speak honestly, I do not wonder at it. His estate, they think, terminates with the land, and has no continuity, as far as interest and authority are concerned, with the shore: *that* belongs to the sea, which belongs, they contend, to every body. How far does the lord paramount push his dominions? To low-water mark? *High-water* mark is his natural frontier according to the popular opinion, and I am greatly inclined to agree with it. If he has a just title to every old cask and plank that is cast on the shore by the sea, he may with equal propriety, as it appears to me, claim all its natural produce, the fish, as far as I know not what mark; and in this manner, our sovereign squires round the kingdom might come to the grace of parcelling out the ocean among themselves, as they have parcelled out the air, and make it as criminal to pick up a periwinkle, as to shoot a partridge.

The occasional interference of lords of manors, with their arrogant and unintelligible pretensions, tends rather to quicken, than restrain, the general eagerness for plunder. "If you come to that, what business has *he* with it more than another?" I have

been often asked by some of these rapacious people, and I never could answer them to their satisfaction or my own. Convince them that "wrecking" is robbery, and they will cheerfully desist from the practice. It is by no means the needy and knavish alone whom you may see hovering with eager eyes and ready hands about a stranded ship: men of substance and character, who hold their heads high in the world, attend vestries, and sit upon juries, join in the pursuit without scruple or shame. The baker, the butcher, the grocer, the whole aristocracy of the village, are perfectly prepared to pick up any little portable God-send on the sea-shore, that may come in their way; though they are all, undoubtedly, people who would scorn to soil their hands by any of the vulgar modes of plain and admitted dishonesty. Mr.————, our respectable blacksmith and bell-hanger, would not hesitate to *find* property belonging to a wreck, to the amount of twenty or thirty pounds, or more, if he could be so lucky; but he would sooner die, I am sure, than pick a neighbour's pocket of a penny, and would combine with all honest men to hoot down the wretch who could be guilty of such a deed, as too infamous for this earth.

Ignorance and prejudice, confirmed and endeared by immemorial habit, are the cause of these moral inconsistencies; and they are the more obstinate, no doubt, as they happen to have a little present profit on their side. All such blinds will eventually be cleared away, I trust, by that "growing intelligence of the age," which we hear so much of just now, but which has not yet got quite so far as the coast. Severe laws and violent punishments would have no effect: as they would not enlighten the minds of "wreckers," they would be regarded only, like the game-laws and the penalties against smuggling, as tyrannical exertions of authority against the poor man's right of a livelihood. The victory will not be speedy or easy, whatever are the means applied; as any one may convince himself, who will take the trouble to reason a little with a "wrecker" on the nature of his opinions. I have done *my* best, as a good subject, to open the eyes of such offenders as have fallen in my way; but, whatever I may be fit for, I have not discovered in myself any gift of making converts amongst them. I talk to them of doing as they would be done by; and they answer me, that they will have no such new-fangled doctrines on the sea-shore; and that what was no sin

with their fathers before them, can scarcely be sin in them. What! not let a man take what the sea sends?—there will be no living in England then, if this is to be law. They talk of a good wreck-season, as of a good herring-season, and thank Providence for both.

ON BEAUTY, AND OTHER CONDITIONS OF FACE.

"Fair is foul, and foul is fair."

NOTHING has exposed Beauty to so much odium and ill-will, as the bombastic misrepresentations of her professed encomiasts and flatterers. Like most earthly sovereigns, she owes her worst enemies to the blundering zeal and officiousness of her friends. The poets, or the courtiers and danglers of her council, have invested her with such outrageous prerogatives, extended her empire so much beyond its natural limits, and made her altogether of so much more importance in the system of the world, than she is or ought to be, that nine-tenths of the human race, who are not of her family, feeling themselves irremediably proscribed, insulted, and degraded, by her arrogant assumptions, have no resource, as a measure of self-defence and justification, but in flat rebellion. I am myself, I perceive,

betrayed into the common strain of the *Ultras* on this subject, and am talking as of a goddess, when I mean nothing more in my heart, than a pair of agreeable eyes, and rosy cheeks.' I beg to correct myself.

If there be truth in the familiar rant that we hear so much of, both said and sung, on the accident of beauty, those who are not beautiful stand convicted at once—signed—branded—as outcasts from the dearest benefits and first honours of our being. What peace can there be in the world under such a dispensation of its blessings? If a perfect face is the only bait that can tempt an angel from the skies, what is to be the recompense of the unfortunate with a wide mouth, and a turn-up nose?

The extravagant influence claimed for beauty has this peculiar ill-effect, that it produces nothing but fretfulness and bad fellowship in *both* of the great classes into which human-kind is divided: those without the pale are burning with envy and malice against those within, who in their turn are harassed by the same order of feelings, and by others not at all more gentle and friendly, towards one another. With the ladies, the very name is a watch-word that calls to arms and to battle; like

some hereditary feud of political party, incapable of settlement, and never to be discussed or thought of without heat, and rage, and unappeasable contradiction. This lady, who is ugly, makes her life miserable, by her ceaseless anxiety to prove that there is no such quality as beauty; and another, who is beautiful, is equally removed from happiness, by the restless pains with which she insists that it is the lot of no one but herself. "A woman," says the President Henault, "will praise one of her sex for any thing but her beauty;" that is, she will praise her for any or every honourable distinction, for the very purpose of denying that she has the smallest pretensions of face. "Miss —— is very clever, and plays charmingly on the harpsichord—in other words, she is any thing but handsome."

No persons have a more hyperbolical opinion of the power and glory of beauty, than the unelect; and *hinc illæ lachrymæ;* hence undoubtedly their peevishness and spite. They attach to it a significance that is altogether romantic, and with this exaggerated estimate of it in their hearts, betray their secret with their tongues, either by denying its existence against the most irresistible evidence, or by refusing to it that moderate degree of control which

really and plainly belongs to it. A woman of sense and feeling, without exterior attractions, regards a beauty as an unrighteous tyrant; one who, on the strength of her mere clay, usurps all hearts; arrogates to herself the empire of love,—a passion which she can neither understand nor requite, to the exclusion of those who, whatever may be their features, alone have souls fit for its home and its worship. This is not true:—beauty has no such excesses to answer for. The conduct of men, since the Deluge, has proved, that love (the true thing) is not mere fealty to a face. The very least angelical, who reasonably contend for all the mind and feeling of the sex, should know, that all which is most profound and impassioned in that sentiment which beauty, to say the worst of it, can no more than inspire, will be given to their worthiness; and with this distinguished advantage, that, being raised on the only safe foundation, it will, when once accorded to them, endure for ever. Beauty may be a short cut to that eminence, which ugliness, or any thing else that you please better than beauty, must reach by a dark, doubtful, and circuitous route: but if her possession is more immediate, it is less secure; if her rule is more absolute, it is less con-

stant and durable. If an ugly woman of wit and worth cannot be loved till she is known,—a beautiful fool will cease to please when she is found out.

A greater variety—a more certain and rapid succession of miscellaneous homage—this truly is chargeable to beauty; but surely the ultra-sentimental should not make this barren honour a subject for their envy and disquiet. 'Instantaneous and universal admiration—the eye-worship of the world, is unquestionably the reward of the best faces; and the male-contents had much better come into the general opinion with a good grace, than be making themselves at once unhappy and ridiculous, by their hollow and self-betraying recusancy. Let them *face* the truth boldly; it is not worth the pains of opposition. Concede to the pretty tyrant all that she asks and can obtain, and it is still but a trifle. There are differences of opinion, it is true, on this point. Madame de Staël, with all her genius and knowledge, and with no imperfect consciousness of her merits, is reported to have declared, that she would cheerfully have given up her accumulated and various distinctions, for the single attribute of beauty. Her name is high authority certainly, but will scarcely sanctify such profanation

as this. If she really made so silly a declaration, and made it from her heart, it proves only, that profound sensibility, and a generous ambition, were not among the number of her many eminent qualifications. The woman—the Frenchwoman—was uppermost, in spite of all her philosophy. If fame, the notice of numbers, was her object, she must have been a loser by the exchange of means which she desired; for she never could have been seen so extensively as she has been heard. If it was the dominion of love that she calculated upon, we must conclude that, being already married, her pride would have been to please, not a husband, but a host. So weak an aspiration might be pardoned in a girl too young to feel a sterling passion, and to form a rational preference; but one who, without beauty, had already secured its noblest triumphs—what was the gift to do for her? what influence was it to bring that could aid—nay, in the spirit in which it was coveted, that would not obstruct her feelings and duties, as a wife and a mother? Her husband, we may presume, was satisfied: for whose sake then was she so desirous of personal charms? Such a preference, in France, I dare say, might be considered to be in the very finest spirit of

feminine tenderness and dignity. A faddling old *beau* of that country, St. Evremond, has asserted that "a woman would sooner lose her lover than her beauty;" and the fact is certainly conceivable. It is possible that a woman would resign a lover for that which won him; the particular attachment of any single heart, for the glory of general conquest; the man for the species. She may dote upon Thomas, perhaps; but would see him drown himself, rather than lose the lustre of a pair of eyes which have been the ruin of Thomas, and may destroy, if she pleases, Richard, and Robert, and as many more as she may chance to look upon. There is nothing anti-Gallican at least, I fancy, in this liberal mode of feeling. Where there is no domestic privacy, where the whole business of life centres in public exhibition and display, it is but natural that a woman's chief care should be, to make herself as diffusive as possible. In our own country, where a woman does not consider her loveliness as misapplied in the nursery, or altogether thrown away upon a husband, such heartless levity, if not without examples, would be scorned, I trust, by the sex.

I would not fall into the opposite extreme of

Turkish watchfulness and monopoly. Though she should not be always gadding about, I would not withhold from beauty her reasonable liberties, or lock her up in constant confinement, with no witnesses but the company provided for her by love and the law. Let her not forget that she has a heart for one; and I will admit, under such limitations as modesty may suggest, that she has a face for all. A pretty woman was made, I suppose, among other things, to be looked at; and she is, therefore, not without excuse, if it be her pride to appear now and then among her fellow-creatures, purely as a show. The preservation of her dignity, with such freedom of display, will depend, of course, upon the art and delicacy with which she may keep up her air of humility und unconsciousness.

I am purposely considering beauty only in its simplest elements and simplest effects, detached entirely from its power of inspiring love—not because I exactly doubt its power, but because I sincerely believe that it has no exclusive privileges in this respect—no pretensions for which ample equivalents may not be presented by every one with the face of woman. Even thus stripped and

isolated—a mere gaud and toy—it has manifest advantages. It is pleasing, exceedingly pleasing, only to look at a beautiful woman; and there can be nothing disagreeable in the sensation of being the object so looked upon. What may be the kind and amount of gratification, it is not for me to decide. It must be something: abuse, despise, the bauble, as we please, it would be as well, after all, to be good-looking, if you could so manage the matter, particularly as there is no reason why you should not when you are about it, to have every other quality that can exalt or adorn our nature.

One mode of consolation with people whose perfections are all out of sight, is, to assume it as a physiological fact, that where nature has been scrupulously careful in the moulding and finishing of her visible and material work—where she has laboured hard at a blue eye, or touched and retouched upon the fall of a pair of shoulders—she has been proportionably hasty and negligent in her mysterious preparations for that unseen, but not unimportant, functionary, the brain. It is not a tenet, with these schismatics, that there is no such thing as beauty; they modestly hold only, that wherever it betrays itself, it is a sure sign of mental

imbecility. "Very pretty, but a fool," is their invariable award; as if sense and knowledge could only wear a set of irregular features and a sallow complexion.—Without inquiring into the reasonableness of this statement, I venture to say, that it is in direct contradiction to popular opinion. By common courtesy, the handsome man is at least not a fool till you know him: as long as there is nothing against him but his good looks, they may fairly be consorted, in your fancy, with every embellishment of mind that can give beauty a meaning, or ugliness a mask. You cannot decide what it may be his fate to discover of himself; and as he stands before you, only an Apollo, he demands from you a liberal construction. He *may* be as captivating as wit can make him—equal, perhaps, to any man, in all his hidden attributes, as he is superior, you see, to most men, in his outward form and proportions. He and the most hideous of men are equal till they speak, as men; and this being so, his beauty is just so much clear and unopposed advantage. He is a philosopher—a lawgiver—in the public streets; and has moreover the best turned leg that you shall see among ten thousand.

Qualifications, indeed, far less prepossessing, and

that appeal much less forcibly to the heart, than beauty, are quite sufficient to gain a person credit for his full share of all the gifts and acquirements that are natural to his place in society. The spirit of that liberal maxim of our law, which holds a man innocent till he is proved to be guilty, directs generally, under certain conditions, all our judgments, or guesses, rather, as to the powers and pretensions of all who present themselves to our notice. One of the conditions is, that a man shall not be very poor—not stand forward in the undisguised infamy of a shabby coat and torn breeches. Such a one, it is a hundred to one, without inquiry, is either a blockhead or a rogue. A well-dressed man, on the contrary, is *primâ facie* a pleasant fellow: till it is known what he is, we agree at once (his hat is warrant enough for us) that he is what he may be and what he ought to be. All the higher qualities of the mind, like the distinctions of rank, are included with particular provisions of the wardrobe and the toilet. An individual ties his neckcloth in a given style, and comes forth a scholar and a gentleman of course. Every one has credit for those endowments which belong to certain classes of coats: my lord duke and his butler are, with the

million, just a pair. A good coat may not be quite so effective as a good person—but, combined, they are irresistible. The fact is so; there is no good in making oneself uneasy about it. We, who are not more conscious of our moral superiority, than of our less promising appearance, may sneer, for our hearts' ease, at the obvious emptiness of the coxcomb who, with the aid of his exterior alone, is carrying away from us all admiration; but the provoking truth is, that, while his fine person and fine clothes are largely admired for their own sakes, they are still more especially triumphant, from their *natural* connexion, in the estimation of the many, with a hundred fine qualities of the soul, of which, in reality, the ninny is as guiltless as his horse. "Well," says Miss B——, "I must say, that Charles is the most entertaining young man that ever I met with; and, Lucy, don't you think he is remarkably handsome?" This is putting the cart before the horse, but the ladies are not aware of any such blunder. They know that the spark is handsome, and they find him agreeable, not, as they conclude in the simplicity of their hearts, for that plain reason;—but because he is so clever, so gay, so humorous, so any thing indeed but—six

feet high and a little over—though they will not deny his meritoriousness on that account—and why should they?

This supremacy of beauty, where people can be judged only by their looks, is so incontestable, that a plain, weakly man, whatever may be his mental powers, cannot find himself, apart from those who know and value him, hemmed in amongst strangers by the tall and the plump and the ruddy, without a slight sense of unworthiness and abasement. In such circumstances, in spite of reason and innocence, he cannot help feeling a little ashamed of himself. The pale poet, whose works enchant us all, is nobody in the Park: with his shrunk cheeks and spindle legs, he sneaks along, as little noticed as a fly; while a thousand fond eyes are fixed on the gay and handsome apprentice there, with just intellect enough to make the clothes which make him. He will be despised, I admit, as soon as he is explained—but till then, his superiority in the passing notice of the multitude is not to be denied. It is not my purpose to claim for beauty any thing not intrinsically its own. I will admit the folly when it is fairly proved—the possible folly—but I will not allow that a fine face is by a law of destiny

the only type of a weak head. On the contrary, I devoutly believe that the lovely eyes of Mary E—— are the index of a mind full of intelligence, fancy, and tenderness; and no one but herself shall ever shake this opinion. She *may* have, and therefore, for me, *has*, the richest endowments of the soul; and, superadded to these, she has a face which any man might be proud to idolize for its own sake—for a week at least. The season of explanation and contempt may come—but still there is a triumph.

This then is the undeniable advantage of beauty: it may fail when convicted as an idiot; but till then it is secure of attention and respect. It cannot make head against talents in direct conflict and fair battle; but, under its own colours, with a sort of neutrality on the part of mind, it sails through the world, conquering and to conquer. The ugly may desire, and the beautiful dread, to be known—the difference between them in the interim being, that the former are disregarded, while the latter are followed and admired. Let wisdom with its plain face regard this difference without malice; for, after all, what is it worth?—a little empty, precarious, perishable homage. It is compliment enough to the sovereignty of mind, that beauty

must at least be supposed to be united with it, before it can assume its full authority. There is no limit to the influence of talents and hard-favoured countenances among friends, or wherever they have a field for action; eventually they must and will prevail, and may well afford to concede to beauty its fickle triumphs and brief superiority, to wink good-naturedly at the simpleton's tricks; and, as they know she cannot maintain her ground against the scrutiny of near friends and judges, to allow her, without snarling, all the credit she can raise, in her light and skimming communication with the ignorant crowd. The vain butterfly, they know, will be discovered to be a worm at last.

There is a danger, however, which the ugly find it difficult to put up with, with any degree of patience. It sometimes happens, they say, even when the creatures are thoroughly detected—established fools—that they still maintain their influence undiminished. You may see a lady, on the strength of nothing in the world but a pair of sparkling eyes, tyrannize over her husband—a sensible, discriminating man, too—as if he was the meanest and simplest of slaves. Love at first sight with such dolls might be forgiven; we complain

that the love sometimes has the hardihood to bear a second sight—one a twelvemonth long, perhaps. There is some truth in this, but it must not be valued at more than it is worth. The fascination of beauty may for a time be so predominant as to warp or suspend our judgment, and make us confound the nature and differences of things. It is very conceivable that a man, haunted by a pretty face, may, till he is a little reconciled to his familiar, find himself involuntarily referring to it as his sole standard and authority, in questions with which it has no concern—mistaking good teeth, perhaps, for good nature, and a silly remark for a dimple in the chin. But such blind adoration as this, unless where two fools come together, must soon have a period. It is impossible to be intimate with folly without despising it. Every body thinks the pretty Mrs. D——— agreeable, except her husband; and he, good man, to do him justice, and not to speak of beauty too lightly, resisted conviction with all becoming obstinacy and gallantry. Every charm of his wife's face and person supplied him in its turn with weapons, sword and shield, against every effort she made to disenchant herself. Her eyes served him for many a day as a sure ar-

tillery against all that she chose to say, or not to say. She had no tastes or feelings in common with him; —but then her complexion! It required almost six months to convince him, that this was not an excuse for her falling asleep when he was reading Guy Mannering to her. He took shelter behind her legs, for I know not how long, against an idle habit she had of never being serious, except when called upon to understand a joke. He found an answer to his wit in her ankles; her foot was a repartee for a month; and after heavy weeks of unmitigated dulness and empty trifling, he still looked upon her lips as eloquence. She drove him at length, however, from all his positions and defences, and he is now certified that his wife is a fool.

Now an ill-conditioned countenance, accompanied, as it always is of course, with shining abilities, and all the arts of pleasing, has this signal compensation; that it improves under observation, grows less and less objectionable the more you look into it and the better you know it; till it becomes almost agreeable on its own account—nay, really so—actually pretty: whereas beauty, we have seen, witless beauty, cannot resist the test of long acquaintance, but declines, as you gaze, while in the full pride of its perfec-

tion; "fades on the eye, and palls upon the sense," with all its bloom about it. Talents bribe and bias the judgment in favour of ordinary features, in the same manner that it is sometimes bewitched by beauty in behalf of folly; with this distinction, that in the first case the error, once formed, knows no change; and in the other is but a passing dream—the mistake of a month—the fascination of a honey-moon.

I may illustrate this point, I hope, without the charge of irreverence, by some notice of our sentiments with regard to brute animals, who, whatever may be their own convictions, are, in our opinions, distinguished by great personal contrasts, many gradations of comeliness, and striking differences of feeling and intelligence. I went the other day to visit a collection of wild beasts, which had just arrived in a retired country town, where, being quite new to most of the people, they were received with eager curiosity. The first word uttered by every one on his entrance into the place of exhibition was some expression of sudden and irresistible disgust at the elephant—that monster of matter, and miracle of mind, as Buffon calls it—an animal that nature seems to have only half made; the

sketch, the rough-draught of a brute; a mass of deformity rendered hideous by a resemblance only to life—like the sculptor's statue just visible in the block; or some creature that a child might scrawl upon paper. Look at his clubbed, post-like legs! What a foot, and ankle! And then his tail!—if ever a tail were ignominious, it is his: and mercy!—his carcass!—mean with all its magnitude,—his hogged back—sneaking haunches—and rugged, sooty, stony, hide!—a hay-stack set upon piles, or the waggon that encloses him, might as soon be mistaken for a living being. Loathsome! frightful! dreadful! such was the style of comment that escaped from the mouths of men and women, as they cast a hasty and scornful glance upon this wise brute of the East. They then crowded about the dens of the other beasts, and nothing was heard but exclamations of delight and admiration at the grand mane of the lion, the rich spotted skin of the tiger, and the dazzling stripes of the zebra. It was curious to observe how soon this feeling subsided, how soon the interest of mere colour and form was exhausted, and lost in satiety—indifference—disregard. In the mean time, a little group that have recovered from the hurry of their first im-

pressions, and are in a state to receive the truth, assemble about the poor patient piece of overgrown awkwardness, whom we have just so much abused —the calumniated elephant. He begins to be found out—he has had time to unfold himself, and his party every moment increases: now a deserter from the lion, and now a turn-coat from the tiger, come over to his side, till at last the whole company, who had so lately combined to vilify him, are jostling and elbowing one another, to witness his sagacity and share his notice. No one talks of his unsightliness now; his intelligence, his gentle manners, and kind, communicative, eye, have won all hearts: he is the sole favourite—the pet of the show. The miracles of his trunk-exercise alone are worth all the lions in the world, and the zebras to boot. Observe with what mixed propriety, handiness, and grace, he turns, and curves, and curls, that wonderful instrument, which can knock down a house, or pick up a pin! See with what politeness and tenderness he gives his keeper the wall!—a horse would tread upon your toes and say nothing; but he knows his own weight and your worth better. Look at him! a lamb in every thing but littleness:—like Elia's giantess, "he

goeth mincingly"—being nine thousand six hundred pounds weight. And is this a creature to be despised for his hide? No, no—the women now are patting his iron sides, and think him "really not so *very* ugly;" they coax him, and joke, and laugh with him, and pull out their halfpence ungrudgingly, to buy him cakes, and see him eat them. "Now, ma'am, observe," says the keeper—and straight he pokes a biscuit into that droll little puckered mouth of his, like a letter into a letter-box—and that is all you have for your penny. And now a mother trusts her infant to his keeping; he cradles it in a bend of his trunk, and stands motionless, like a figure of patience and parental love. The child screams, and he hears and understands; nay, fear not, he would not, his eye swears to you he would not, harm it, for his liberty. There is no standing this—bursts of applause—"noble brute"—"generous animal"—"tender soul"—come quick from all tongues; nay, as a climax to his triumph, even, "pretty creature," is not spared, so true it is that, "handsome is, that handsome does." To pursue the parallel to the utmost of its bearing on my subject, I may state that this affectionate admiration was not more lively than it

will be durable. The good folks will soon forget the lion's mane and the zebra's stripes; but their interchange of kindly thoughts and kindly acts with the elephant are matters of the head and heart, and are not to be forgotten.

To return to my humanities. I have hitherto presumed, in compliance with the exactions of the censorious, that a person, to be handsome, must be without mind and feeling; and have made out, I think, even with this admission, that good looks have still their term of reverence. But, as I have already intimated, my actual opinions are far less harsh and exclusive. However the case may be between the tiger and the elephant, I am by no means assured that, with us, the highest intelligence, and the most engaging manners, are inseparable from the coarsest figures. The elephants amongst us have their sure reward, and they deserve it (*that* is my moral); but we are not all elephants that look so. I have no faith in the natural alliance of beauty and folly: whatever may be the laws of its distribution, I believe that mind has no uniform dependence upon our eyes and noses; I believe that there are no mutual influences between wisdom and a white skin; in a word, that the

loveliest woman on earth may have all the wit, and fancy, and tenderness, and polish, and grace, that ennoble the sallow Mrs. B——, and the red-haired Miss C——. I am aware of the disturbance that I may raise about my ears, by this inordinate declaration. Am I raving? do I know what I mean? What excuse do I propose to the worthy many, the ugly, the plain, the middling, and the so-so, when I thus load the few—the elect, forsooth, with the means of gaining, not alone all eyes, but all hearts? Patience—patience—the case is not altered a tittle. If the beautiful win hearts and retain them (for that is the desideratum) they derive their power from their intellects, and their affections, from all those qualities which they have in common with the ugly; (our language is sadly deficient in terms for those who are not handsome); while their beauty is still no more than I have described it, to be—a light additament—not eyes and nose, but their colour and shape; a pretty, a very pretty, trifle, well worth the having; but not worth the pride and arrogance of many that have it, nor the envy and ill-humour of more that want it. This is the fact, be assured: quote not from

Moore or his imitators; look to nature and truth. look round upon your married acquaintance.

There is one certain comfort for all those who are foolish and cruel enough to desire it. The most beautiful must lose their beauty—a forfeiture that at once atones for all their crimes of face. The leveller, *Fifty*, will have his day, when the beauty will find no sighs for her losses in any heart but her own. I advert to this pitiless epoch, much less as a consolation to the envious, than as a warning to those whom it most concerns; and with this warning (beware and be wise), delivered with all friendliness and respect from one not of the elect, I conclude.

ON FAME AND MONUMENTS.

To be forgotten, is almost as much the general lot as to die, yet few submit to this dreary particular of our common sentence without a hope of some mitigation and allowance. We will not yield to death tamely, we think: let him stop our present breath and take us from future action; our past lives at least, we fondly imagine, are beyond his reach—these we may make our proxies, our present and future, among the generations of men, and so secure a sort of being in this world, even when we hope to be breathing, thinking, and enjoying, in a better. I have heard people say that they could think with more patience of dying, than of being buried; and I can understand their feeling in this respect. It is explicable, indeed, by that sympathy which quickens our tears and deepens our sobs at a burial—as if there was almost another death for one departed, in this his final abstraction from the

sight of the living world. We feel as if there was a loss after death, and its completion was in the grave. To die is to forget; to be buried is to be forgotten.

This horror of oblivion was not planted in our souls only to sadden us, it being, perhaps, the most powerful and permanent of all motives to useful and honourable action. Let those, who would not be forgotten, deserve to be remembered. The achievements which tend most to raise the minds, to humanize the feelings, and improve the condition of men, are the best securities for a cherished and lasting life in their memories. There is no burial, for the great benefactors of their kind. But the love of fame is an universal passion; and it would be hard if some degree of the enjoyment were not permitted to the crowd who, wanting ability or opportunity, cannot exactly comply with the severe condition of deserving it. Attention must not be confined to those talkers only who have something to say. Every one who has a tongue has his lingual rights—his vocal privileges. Even Mr. ——— *speaks*, and thereupon is called "the honourable gentleman." The love of life may, in strictness, be defensible only, like the love of fame, as it is

combined with the love and the power of being useful; yet would it be a harsh measure to put all those worthy persons to death, who have no reasons for being spared, except a simple fancy for being alive. As the meanest has his pretensions to his life in the flesh, his decent pride of eating, drinking, and sleeping, so he would do his little best to hold his inch of posthumous place; and if there be room, why turn him out? A joint boiled to-day and baked to-morrow, as life, and a name over a vestry-door or on a new pump, as immortality, are allowances which it is scarcely worth while to look grudgingly upon. As for me, who take my rank amongst the minnows, and not as a Triton either, I have a due fellow-feeling for their humble emulation and tiny pride; and would for their benefit, passing without notice all the great bases of sterling and enduring fame, say a few words on the comparative value of those small foundations, to which they must trust the precarious fortunes of their after-lives and dignities.

Publicity and permanency are the chief qualities, I imagine, which every one would desire in his monument, or *locum tenens*, in this world; but as these cannot often be found combined in such crea-

tions as are equal to the mediocrity of ordinary men, he must choose between them, or go without them, as his means may allow, or his fancy suggest. An epitaph, as being a special and exclusive illustration of your particular *case*, seems to be an obvious mode of notoriety; and as it is open to the humblest aspirants (for there are always plenty of hands, I believe, ready to undertake such things at so much a virtue), it is naturally in pretty general use and favour. Yet in truth it is but a poor perishable record, beneath the ambition of any one who courts even a moderate share of immortality. We have no reason to complain of epitaphs, that they are niggardly and lukewarm in their notices; to give them their due, they say quite enough of us generally—but where is the security for their being believed and remembered, or read? A few complimentary stanzas may be delivered over to the keeping of print—and how are you the more famous for that? Who sees them? Who reads them? If you could make interest with some poet, safe in his own renown, to spare you a few lines, (any thing would do), you might, perhaps, come in amongst his minor pieces in some sweep-all edition of his works, and so, as it were, be taken in tow

down to future ages. I know no other means of keeping an epitaph afloat.

The church-yard, that centre of universal interest and observation, should seem, in point of situation, not ill-recommended to the candidates for fame; yet, loaded as it is with sculptured stone and monumental brass, it can confer little distinction either in degree or duration. Here is publicity more than enough; but no individuality; you are but one in a crowd; your claims to notice are confounded with those of your fellows; while the whole mass of tombs affects the living, only as one great memento of general mortality. Then again the vulgarity of the place! It is not every one, were there the opportunity, who would be willing to travel to posterity with the *canaille* of the common ground. Not to insist upon this objection, there is the insecurity of possession to check our hopes and mortify our pride. An inscription is soon worn away, and who expects to be renewed in the stone by his great-grand-children? The age of martyrs is gone, and there is no "Old Mortality" who would waste his time upon us poor drones who die in our beds. I would not willingly expose myself to a charge of unbecoming levity towards any of the natural

solemnities of this momentous subject. I have no such thought in my heart; but our whims and vanities—a good-humoured laugh at them can do no harm, I believe, whether they be on the earth or under it. I have my human right of a word on this topic, be it merry or otherwise: I am a party concerned. It is not like the rich man sneering at the poor, or the proud man taunting the humble: I claim no exemptions: my turn will come. I cannot twit my neighbour with the meanness of being buried one of these days. We will move, however, to more open ground.

It is by no means necessary, for the preservation of a name, that you should have a monument made expressly for yourself, with an immediate reference in all its parts and intentions to your person and merits. There may be something flattering to the feelings in this sort of undivided greatness; but, from the imperfectness of man's art, and the fragility of such materials as he can control and combine, it is humblingly transitory, as I have shown; not very lively or distinct, and, moreover, exceedingly expensive. There is a great variety of ready-made monuments in still life and inanimate nature, which, if they appear in themselves to have little

concern with man's good or evil fame, may yet be made pertinent to him by the consent and courtesy of society. If you will travel far enough, where such things are not already bespoke, you may, by the transference of your name, adopt, and identify yourself with, an island—a strait—a mountain—a promontory—or "a queer hummock;"—and so go halves with them in the notice of the world. If monuments of this compound character are less personal, and excite less of present attention, than more appropriate works of statuary or sculpture, they are considerably cheaper, we must remember, and, if not quite so vivacious, will carry you down into far more distant ages of time. Such forms of existence are somewhat too dull, I acknowledge, to please my fancy; but tastes differ. It is not every one, indeed, who has interest to get such honours, who can take his place among the "*Croker Heads*," and "*Pitt Points*," and such lofty company; we, therefore, of lower powers, must content ourselves with more petty and perishable objects, which may, perhaps, compensate us for their greater frailty, by their greater liveliness, and their more constant and intimate communion with the eyes, and tongues, and thoughts of men.

What think you of being a stage-coach with six *insides*, as The Wellington? This is a common vehicle of fame, and, with its horn (trumpet), fame-like, is certainly a jolly, noisy, rattling, kind of remembrancer, that may make a man as notorious, over some hundred miles or so, on any of the great roads, as a moderate ambition should desire. Your life must have a period in such a state—its journey's end; and as you are but a tenant at will, you are, of course, exposed to all the changes that are peculiar to that uncertain tenure. Not to mention the common wear and tear of wheels, there can be no comfortable reliance on the affection and fidelity of coach proprietors. Such people will be truckling to every flashy novelty of the passing hour; and no man should be surprised to see the *Old Original Cornwallis* brightened up in a moment, without provocation or apology, into the *New Opposition Canning*. Nevertheless, this condition of being is better than nothing.

Our horses, who perform so many hard services for us, are no bad hacks for our names. People of limited merits, at least, may trust themselves to worse reporters. Mr. M———'s bay colt *Jones* (I forget the pedigree) will, if there ever was truth

in two pair of legs, do incalculably more towards the celebrity of the name it bears, than ever will be done for it by Mr. Jones. We honour these animals with our names, we are pleased to say; but that is as it may happen. What if the brute should turn out an Eclipse? Who would be the gainer then? I have a dog called after Lord ———, and, unless his lordship be strangely scandalized, his vicegerent with a tail - - - - - but comparisons, they say, are odious.

Some prefer a ship—a man-of-war—as their deputy; and it is undoubtedly an official, to which any man may be proud to confide his name. As a three-decker, or a tight frigate, you might, by a fortunate concurrence of circumstances, be lifted on even to the utmost period (and a period there must be) of subcelestial immortality. If you could engage for a smart war, a gallant action, and some great death on board, you would at once be mixed up with events for history,—become "booked," as they say of a parcel, and sure of your place to the end of time at least. There are other casualties too, out of the ordinary course of service, that might raise you to very enviable distinction. Who would have thought of the marvellous chance that

fell upon the old *Northumberland*? But luck like this no man has a right to calculate upon; and, as the world goes, you might find your life as a ship neither very glorious nor very long—let me see—fifty years (at the outside) of easy sailing between Plymouth and the Downs, with an occasional trip to the West Indies and back again; to which may be appended ten years more of a kind of secondary existence, under jury-masts, or as a sheer hulk, and floating prison. This is about the best that you could reasonably hope for; and you must not conceal from yourself, that you might be prematurely despatched by the common accidents of the sea, or hurried off in your prime by the dry-rot. Merchant ships I barely allude to, for they are scarcely fit for a gentleman's use. No one, I presume, above a tallow-chandler, would desire to be the *William of Yarmouth*.

A street—a town—(think of Romulus)—are good monuments on many accounts, independent of durability, and more dear to our feelings even than that very important quality. They are, as one may say, pleasant, cheerful, monuments, that will keep a man's name, not only alive always, but awake. For my part, I should like very well to be

a square—a terrace—or a row; and should prefer them to a hill or a headland, on the principle of "a short life and a merry one." I might on any disastrous day be burned out by a fire, or expunged by other interlopers; but then as long as I *was* permitted to endure, how infinitely should I be looked at and talked of! Never out of somebody or other's mouth from year's end to year's end—thousands of people continually inquiring after and trying to find me out; and a bag-full of letters daily, with the same invariable reference to me! More homage might be done to my name during a single week as a street, than might be incident to it as a hill in five centuries. I can conceive no pleasure in moping out my immortality as an Egyptian desert, or an eternal mountain at the North Pole. I have not the smallest wish to be *Melville Island:* I would rather be *Houndsditch.* I should not feel comfortable as *Botany Bay: Waterloo* I might have put up with; but, if I had my free choice, I think I would be *Hyde-Park-Corner.* On the same grounds of preference, were I to live beyond the grave as a book, I would rather be some light, lively, volume, to be thumbed, and dog's-eared, and tossed about from table to chair

for my little term of fame, and then be forgotten for ever, than some huge folio, immortal and immoveable, on the top shelf—the Pole of the library—dull region of primeval dust, and perpetual cobwebs.

There are people who have a strange fancy for trusting their names under the foundation-stone of a new bridge, or church, or free-mason's lodge. I consider this to be the very worst scheme of fame that ever was invented. Fame!—it is wilfully hiding yourself from day; hoarding yourself up, in the blundering spirit of the miser, who at once secretes, and nullifies his gold. You may amuse yourself with the notion, and there you are snug and out of harm's way for centuries; but if nobody is to see, hear, or think of you, in your solitude, you are not a whit more alive, as it appears to me, under your stone, than in your coffin. It is in fact precisely burying yourself alive. If these structures tumbled to pieces with the same order and etiquette with which they are founded, you might, perhaps, be turned up to the light again for a moment among some remote generations of men—which would be pleasing;—but, as they are not in the habit of going to ruin so methodically, you would, in all

probability, never be released from your confinement; and, for any purposes of notoriety, might as well be ending your days with Mr. Southey's Arvalan, "ten thousand thousand fathoms down in an ice-rift." No—heaven keep me and my friends from the foundation-stone of a bridge!

A portrait, on canvas or in stone, though not within the class of monuments ready-made, and free of cost, is yet a means of extending a little the natural allowance of life, which is within the reach of common men. I think little of it myself. Your vanity may be gratified by leaving a representative so purely and exclusively personal to yourself; but the misfortune is, that these kind of trustees, while they may preserve your face, are very apt to lose your name. If you allow yourself to be transcribed by an inferior hand, you know very well that ere long your resting-place will be among the enigmatical lumber of some repertory of "Marine Stores," —the Capulet's tomb of such productions; and if you apply to an artist of eminence, you may find *his* name so paramount and absorbing, as to carry you to posterity, not as Mr. B. or Mrs. W., but as "a Lawrence," or "an Owen." Why should you let out your features for the benefit only of another's

reputation? If I were dead and gone, I would not give two-pence, to be "a Titian;"—And yet I would too; yes—yes—there must be something in that—a *secret* satisfaction—I only mean to say that such a distinction is not the road to glory. A portrait is a memorial rather for private or family affection, than for public fame. It should never travel from its native walls, and the tutelary partialities of its own friends and relations. At home, as "a little ugly gentleman over the settee," it may give a man a sort of immortality of domestic life—keep him warm in the love and esteem of his kindred, down to the remotest limit of tradition—even to his grand-children—and thenceforward hold him in preservation, to the end of colour and canvas, as an ancestor, at least, or a curiosity, perhaps, worth something for the cut of his coat and the tie of his neck-cloth. Once out of doors and at large, it is no longer a portrait, but a painting; no longer you, but a fine piece of colour, or a noble design.

There is one method, now I think of it, of introducing yourself to the public as a portrait, without change of place and consequent danger to your identity:—I allude to the agency of the sign-post.

A *sign* is really no bad guardian and dispenser of a name: but it is not for the vulgar, for those whom nobody knows. It cannot be made the founder of a name: a man must have done something before he can take the place of the *Saracen's Head*. As an accessary to other sources of fame, it is not beneath the consideration of any one who has an honest ambition to multiply his acquaintance. The extra-genteel may affect to think it low—and why?—what are their exquisite reasons? It may not add any material brilliancy to your rank among the best company in the higher regions—the "dress walks" of fame; but, as a means of publishing yourself to the multitude, who have no access to the prouder evidences of your greatness, where will you find a more effective *chaperon*, or more useful master of the ceremonies? How many are there at this time of day, even among the polite and well-taught, who, if they would speak the truth, derive their liveliest impressions of old Benbow and Rodney from their honest faces swinging aloft, or staring steadily from their frames, at inn-doors and ale-houses! Envy, rankling envy, must be at the bottom of their contempt, who profess to despise such distinctions. Talk about low indeed! Who

will make *you* a sign? You give yourself airs of haughtiness and self-denial, but—"let me whisper in your lug—You're aiblins nae temptation." The only sensible objection that I can propose to *signs*, as depositories of our posthumous life, is the precariousness—the briefness of their reign. They do in some instances maintain a specific symbolization with wonderful constancy, through all changes of time, men, manners, and customs; but it is rather in favour of abstractions—allegories—fictions—prodigies (what shall we call them?) than of any definite lady or gentleman. There will be no end to the *Good Woman*—no upper end worth talking of, certainly; the *Green Man and Still* is still green; and the *King's Head* never dies; but the *King of Prussia*, I fear, is fading fast; our first and second *Georges* look deadly dull, and dim, and pale; and the *Duke of Cumberland* (I think it must be the Duke of Cumberland) has only a speck or two of horse—a rag of coat—a scrap of hat—half a face—a bit of sword, and a leg, to stand between him and oblivion. There is an exception, and only one that occurs to me, to this law of *signal* death. The *Shakspeare's Head* (just the head for lasting) has not grown a day older within the me-

mory of man. Yes—there *is* another—the *Garrick's Head* (a very good head in its way) stands almost cheek by jowl with the immortal poet, and keeps itself young and fresh in the light of his countenance.

Cutting or scratching a name on a tree, a wall, or an inn-window, is, in the way of monument-making, the simplest and most unpretending deed that I can think of—the humblest exercise of the love of fame—of that great passion of high and low, which will work with a pin's point, and has cumbered the earth with the pyramids. Yet how blind is our pride! how limited our foresight! Works thus insignificant—the labour of a minute—the merest hints of ambition, have lived through more centuries than the proudest productions of human art and toil. On some of the walls of Pompeii (if I remember rightly) the scrawlings—the "T. Jenkins," "I love you," and "Burdett for ever," of the Roman soldiers, are still visible—frail memorials, preserved by the same catastrophe that buried the town and its people, and now brought to light, when the ETERNAL CITY has scarcely a vestige left of all that it contained of great, and good, and fair. In the little village of Bowness, on the Cumberland border of the Solway Frith, the traveller, if he have ardour

enough to hunt for them, may see here and there a smooth tablet of freestone (fragments from the Picts' wall) set in like a picture on the unhewn front of a cottage or a barn, showing names, Roman names, as rudely cut, and nearly as old, as those at Pompeii, and whose authors, no doubt, as little calculated upon a reader outliving the era of Rome.

I have pretty nearly exhausted, I believe, the whole catalogue of monuments, as supplied by the materials and ingredients of our own world. The heavens present a more barren field to our ambition. The fleeting clouds will not abide at our bidding; and there are no points of note, or marks of difference—no resting-places for us in the blue ether—the equal and infinite sky. The stars are the only objects that we can separate and individualize, and they are all *engaged*. Oh! to have been the moon—the sonnet-hallowed moon! But that is out of the question now:—she is the moon. I have not heard that comets have yet been appropriated by human vanity, and I see not why they should be disregarded. Their visits are few and far between; but what a stir they make when they do come! The *Prince Regent Comet!* it sounds as well as the *Prince Regent Bath Coach*. It is Fontenelle, I

think, who observes, that "as the very things (our monuments) which should secure us from death, moulder away, and die after their manner—as a city—a province—nay, an empire, cannot be responsible for our immortality—it is no bad plan to give your name to a star, which lasts for ever." The stars are creditable monuments, no doubt—sound funds in which to vest a name; but I do not see why they are better than any solid parts of our earth in sufficient quantity. A hill or a valley you might not be willing to trust—then choose a continent or a good bouncing island. He who adopts a star has a whole world to himself, which is certainly preferable to any *part* of a world; so much I grant; but the notion that the stars will be more durable as our monuments, than the four quarters of our own globe, is purely fanciful. Allowing them this precedence in stability, as an honour to themselves, as stars, it is still an enigma to me, how we are to perpetuate in them our mortal interests and vanities. We cannot conjecture what revolutions and catastrophes await those bodies; but, admitting that our dear planet is to perish first, how, after its dissolution, are we to preserve our names here or in the heavens? There the stars are, to be sure, and may

be; but where will be our authority for the Jupiter and the Mars—the Liverpool and the Wellington, amongst them? No—when the earth tumbles to pieces, there is an end of the *Georgium Sidus*; as surely as of the Laureate's hexameters. We must not confound the perishable name with the immortal star. It is not as if our excellent monarch had become an indestructible part and parcel of this luminary. We loyal earthites may be pleased to think so; but what may the moonites and the whole "starry host" say to such a notion? The star was, before we discovered it, and we cannot be permitted to name it, as if we had made it. A transitory conjunction—a pretty compliment, perhaps, to both parties, during the natural life of this terraqueous globe—but no farther: the nature of things forbids it.

Yet I freely allow that, to our feelings and natural prejudices, the name and the thing are in most cases inseparable. *Beachy Head* is a lofty promontory on the Sussex coast; and this same promontory is—is *Beachy Head*. There is nothing more to be said about it. It is the same with the names of persons. The name and the individual are so identified and confused—so co-existent, co-

ordinate, and co-operative, that the imagination can scarcely separate them. They are one to all intents and purposes. Who is that gentleman?—Mr. Jones. And who is Mr. Jones? There he stands. Turn them as you will, you cannot part them: they must be and die together. There are persons, indeed, who change their names, and, we are given to believe, live; but such self-desertion is a most barbarous and unnatural practice, to which I can scarcely concede my faith, and to which I never can reconcile my affections. I cannot help considering it as a kind of suicide. A man's name is so much flesh of his flesh, particularly in the estimation of his friends, that he can scarcely get rid of it without blood-guiltiness. When my friend E——, is not E——, or he, he is lost to me: I know him not; he is a stranger; Mr. Anybody. By such an act of exchange (which, if it is not robbery, is murder in this instance), a man at least destroys all his past being—kills and buries a whole life of impressions, associations, and recollections, that were as real as himself. He begins again: he is another and *not* the same. Who is Lord Bexley? Mr. Vansittart that *was*—the deceased Mr. Vansittart. It is so: our habits and prejudices—in short, it *is* so. Nay

—you may say—there is Lord Bexley just as usual —*semper idem*:—but where is Mr. Vansittart? No—I enter my solemn protest against all such doings—such puzzling anomalies—such vicarious representations of ourselves. I cannot allow a man to stand proxy for himself. Lord Bexley, or Mr. Vansittart either—or neither—as you please; but not both, and both in one. An addition, a partnership, in this particular, would be less offensive, perhaps, than an absolute change:—not that I approve even of this degree of tampering with our reality; but of the two evils, or crimes, it is the least. A Co. might with a little use become endurable. It is best, however, to leave ourselves alone.

Some people have a dislike to certain titles in very great men, simply as titles, which derogate, they think, from the nobility of mind. They are not willing, for instance, that a fine poet should be a lord. I do not agree with this sentiment to its utmost extent. If the title has been long attached to the man—has long co-existed with his characteristic actions, and personal adventures, it becomes, not only not degrading, but could not be withdrawn without violence to our feelings. I could not bear that Lord Bacon, or Sir Isaac Newton, should give

up even his name of mere rank; but if the grave were unfortunately open to court-honours, I could never submit with patience to Lord Shakspeare. He must be born again, or you could not lower him down to such a dignity without profanation. The man must have time to ennoble the title, or it may be worse than an encumbrance. It is a dangerous measure for a great man, as they say, to *retire* on a title: if he cannot begin, or at least go on, with one, he must be a loser by the accession—a loser of himself. His title can have no retrospective influence, except to darken and confound. The old man we knew; the new lord is an experiment.

SEA-ROAMERS.—OLD JOHNNY WOLGAR.

"List ye landsmen all to me."

THAT "one half of the world does not know how the other half lives," is a very ancient truth, I fancy, and, in spite of the advances of knowledge, it is perfectly applicable, I believe, in the present era of mankind. Every man has his own world, or a little plot cut out of the great mass to which his own wants and habitudes confine his experience, and which he calls "the world." The Duke of —— has so many courses served up to his dinner-table daily, the remains of which, he is positive, are removed to be consumed by his servants; and this, he determines, is the way of "the world." Every body does so. He wears a coat three weeks, and then makes it over to his butler—and that is how people get clothed. Not a dozen streets from his princely mansion, there are human beings wonder-

ing, whether "the *bone* hashed up with a few potatoes will do for to-morrow;" others agreeing that a bit of mutton "is rather high, but will do to make broth of;" and a fellow-creature protesting that, shabby as his coat is, it will go a month or two yet—*turned*; yet such things are as inconceivable to the Duke as if they were occurrences of another planet. Has his Grace the smallest conception that there is such a stratagem on our earth as *re*-beavering a hat, and *reviving* a pair of trowsers? Not he, believe it.

There are means of earning a subsistence—modes of human toil, so out of the great high-ways of industry—so disconnected from the regular rattle and bustle of the community—so lowly—lone, and independent of all general interests; that, with regard to ordinary observers, they may be said to be absolutely invisible to the naked eye. You must search for them—stoop down to them—handle them—as you would some minute and mysterious process of animal life—put your ear to them—smell at them—before you can ascertain or guess at their nature and use. What *is* that strange-looking man about? What then—pampered sloth! You will not go and see? Well—stay a little, and I will tell you all

about it. I can assure the great Duke before-mentioned, that he may see an old man clad in black sack-cloth, with a rope round his waist—bent, and wan and grey—pass by his window daily at his breakfast-time, who feeds and clothes himself (just as his Grace may see) with the profit accruing from old bones which he picks up from the public streets. I am positively serious, yet his Grace, I dare say, will pause from his chocolate, and listen to the fact with the same sort of incredulous wonder with which he might hear that there are living beings some hundred thousands of times less than a mite. And this too is far—far indeed, from the limit of human littleness and desolation.

The accidents of my life have often brought me into very intimate communion with the poor, so as to make me perfectly familiar with their dispositions and habits, as dependent upon the peculiar circumstances of their condition, and let me into many secrets of strange drudgery and privation, which, as I never saw them mentioned under any head in the quarterly reports of our ever-increasing prosperity, are, I imagine, very little known or felt for out of the bosoms of the sufferers. The obscurity, remoteness, and narrowness of *their* "world"—and

the extreme insignificance of their relations with the worlds of other people, readily account for the sort of exile in which they live from common sympathy; a state still further secured to them by the gentle and quiet humility of their own manners and deportment—for, though the last—the lowest among the sons of toil, they are never forward to announce themselves in the angry language of repining and discontent. They have still something to lose who lift up their voices to remonstrate and threaten. The poor patient drudges of whom I am speaking, who have nothing more to fear—and they know not what to gain—lay down their heads nightly in perfect gratitude that they are permitted to live. Oh! how beautiful are the dispensations of nature! how certain her consolations!, how all-covering her charities in every condition of human existence!

I have lately been much in the company of a class of lowly labourers, calling themselves *Sea-Roamers*, who work out, I think, about as stubborn and precarious a "daily bread" from this earth of ours, as any men who have ever fallen under my observation. They are not of the order of adventurers called *wreckers:* the service of the *wrecker* is uncertain and occasional; whereas, the roamer is a

never-failing attendant at the sea side, where he wanders about from morning till night, to pick up (if God sends him luck, says he) the refuse—the offal of the sea, native and extraneous, that is cast ashore by the tides. The nature and extent of the returns given by this occupation to a life of toil, through a winter's season and severities, I will explain in due time. The circumstances of the sea-roamer may derive a certain fanciful dignity from the external scenery in which he moves,—from his bold familiarity with storm and rain, and the undisputed freehold which he has and enjoys in the ample sky, and the pure breath of the bountiful sea; but, in all essential respects of rank and consequence, he stands in about the same relation to society, as those Cyclops-like figures, with sacks at their backs, which my London readers, no doubt, must have often seen lurking about under back walls, and in dingy corners, rifling the treasures of cinder-heaps. These searchers of cinders are more abject in their appearance; they are black—bleareyed, and have a furtive, larcenous look about them, which is not prepossessing; but still they may be honest (when back doors are shut), and as to substantial profits they rather outdo, I believe,

the poor rangers of the beach. I shall, perhaps, best illustrate the nature and vicissitudes of sea-roaming, by some little account of the life of one of its most assiduous followers; a man with whose ways I happen to be deeply conversant, and who surely deserves some notice, as having been long known between *Castle Point* and *Birley Gap*, on the coast of S——, as "King of the Roamers." I adopt this plan too the more readily, seeing that this distinguished old beach-man had, independent of his merits and services in his profession, many peculiarities in his actions, manners, and deportment, that rendered him a very interesting personage; so much so, that, even among the dull partners of his labours, he had the credit of being "quite a character." Half an hour's biography, collected from his pilgrimage of nearly four-score years on this globe, may not be unentertaining, I hope, to the reader, and, perhaps, not quite uninstructive.

"Old Johnny Wolgar" had always lived in his native place, a small town on the coast of S——, where, in one form of enterprise or another, he had always, as the phrase is, followed the sea. I propose to say little of him but what I actually saw during

the last two years of his life. Through the vigour of his manhood he had been an industrious and able fisherman—was part-owner of a boat and nets—could make a trip to "the other side" once in a season—board an Indiaman in the channel on a dark night, and "all that sort of thing,"—got married—came to be a father, and lived prosperously; till Time at length had his usual effects with Johnny as with all flesh; he grew old—was decided to be not seaworthy—sold his share in the boat that he could no longer serve—turned shrimper and purveyor of periwinkles, till he could no longer stoop to pick them up—and so dwindled away, step by step—till he finally settled into a roamer, content to take his pittances from the bounty of that element, from which he had once gallantly forced, as it were, his subsistence—a poor pensioner of the waves—an humble dependent on the chance-medley of "jettsom and flottsom."

He went on in this character without change, or wish for change, for many years; and at the period when I first became acquainted with him, and when he was seventy-two years old, he was still a simple roamer, relying on his own exertions for his subsistence, and for that of a wife about as old and

crazy as himself. The first sight of him told you at once that he was no common man. You could not pass him on the beach like an every-day fish, I promise you! In his appearance were signs of age and decrepitude rather more marked than the years he had passed seemed to warrant: but Johnny had "lived hard"—in a very hard sense of the word. His face was hollow and grim—the eyes little better than blanks—dim—pale—deep-sunk in his head, and overthatched with a white bushy brow;—the nose long and sharp—and the jaws, skeletonized, and grizzled over from cheek to throat with a stubbly beard an inch in length. His skin had not a tinge of red upon it, but, without any hue of sickliness, was mellowed by sun and wind, and age, into a fine Rembrandt tan, and furrowed, and puckered, and knotted, like the bark of an old tree. On this time-worn and weather-beaten head grew a very picturesque sort of hat, painted black and glazed, with a cupola top and a broad flapping brim, from beneath which dropped down a few lank locks of wiry hair. With all this ruggedness, there was an expression of extreme mildness and benevolence in his countenance: every feature was roughened and disfigured by long suffering and exposure; but

amongst all his marks of hard usage, there was not one of ill-humour or discontent. Of his person you might fairly declare that it was still entire: he had all his limbs about him, though in truth, his usufruct in them was singularly limited. Rheumatism, he used to say, had clapped him in irons all over; his joints were all double-locked, and would as little bend as his shin bones. But in losing his suppleness, he had fortunately hardened upright, and it was among his few vanities that, if no longer apt at a hornpipe, he was as stiff and straight as a Prussian grenadier. He wore a smock frock on his body, while his lower limbs were smothered in rags, so that he had not in the least the appearance of a creature of coat and breeches, but may have been said rather to have been bandaged than dressed. By various means, direct or indirect, he contrived at least to provide a sufficiency of covering to keep out the weather,—and that done, his utmost pride on the score of dress was thoroughly satisfied.

This rigid body, so confined and *mummied*, will scarcely be thought properly appointed for walking, or any such violences. In fact, my old friend performed all his excursions on horseback, and he considered this means of loco-motion, that was still

spared to him, as an ample compensation for all the losses and crosses with which he had to reproach the weather and the world. "Keeping a horse," had not the same meaning with him as with ordinary riders. His horse was not a supernumerary servant, to be used one day and neglected another, as whim might suggest, but the main spring of his whole system—his staff of life;—to have deprived him of it would have been to doom him to perpetual imprisonment, and shut him out from all the uses of the world. It was his legs—his liberty—his every thing. How he supported this necessary creature I could never exactly ascertain. In the summer time it fed cheaply if not abundantly (it was neither glutton nor epicure, I answer for it) on the compound and spontaneous vegetation of hedges and ditches; and during the barrenness of winter, a little eleemosynary damaged hay, from one kind farmer or another, was sufficient, it was found, to keep off absolute famine: what farther provision there was, I am not, I confess, prepared to set forth. The horse, Bob—or "Old Bob," as he was most pertinently defined, was precisely the one that I should have chosen for Johnny, for it was impossible to conceive any thing more happily in keeping with

all his peculiarities. I never saw his exact parallel, yet I have no bad eye, as we say, for a horse. He was some sixteen years old when I had first the luck to see him, and, as far as looks were concerned, could not have been older had he lived sixteen centuries. Every bone in his body was anatomically defined, all his flesh appearing, as it were, to have been dragged from his sides, and to bag down in a vast tense pot-belly. His great lumping head bore about the same proportion to his straight, scraggy neck, that a pump bears to its handle; and at his opposite extremity, bounding the spinal line of his sharp, knotty back, was another oddity quite as characteristical, in the shape of a tail, which stuck out horizontally, and consisted of about a foot of naked stump, fringed near the root with a scanty and irregular wisp of grizzly hair. He had been originally a black, but his coat, as black coats are wont, had apostatized into a Mulatto; and, like all old coats too, betrayed every rent and mending that it had suffered in its whole course of wear and tear, together with large and frequent spots of bare, corny skin, which stared out like patches of another stuff, and gave the poor animal the same ragged, motley, beggar-like aspect that distinguished his

loving master. On this reverend hack, with a sack for his saddle, Johnny usually took his station about an hour after day-light, and was seldom restored to the ground before dark. His labour and ceremony of mounting were by no means the least entertaining act of his day to lookers-on, though a sore tax on his own infirmities. With the help of two or three neighbours, who would always willingly be present, and his own hooked fingers, he contrived to scramble up and fall upon his belly across his horse's back, where he lay straightened out and *see-sawing* like a plank, till he was stopped by his friends, who would swing him round, force open "his damned obstinate legs," as he called them, and push him, and pull him, and poke him about, and so, at last, compel him to sit. This difficulty conquered, he had still much to do before he got fairly under way. As he had no fund of ready activities about him for accidents as they might happen, it was an object to make his furniture and himself fast at once in the posture in which they were to remain, and which was best suited to his convenience and the general necessities of his voyage. And first his basket was handed up to him, the receptacle of his prizes,

which he duly placed on his left thigh: he then introduced his left arm with the assistance of the right under the arch of the handle, and secured both articles in their places, by means of three or four turns of the bridle round his wrist. Bob, with many other faculties, had entirely lost his sense of bridle, yet the implement was still retained, and, bitless as it was, fastened to his head as to a post, not only for decency's sake, but as something for Johnny to take hold of for his ease and security. Now as our adventurer never dismounted when abroad, unless tempted by a mighty prize indeed, and as the act of dismounting and again mounting was, with such casual help as he could procure, in itself equivalent to at least half a day's work, he had provided against the necessity of leaving his seat by a simple instrument of his own invention—a long pole with a spike and hook at one end, with which he had learned to stick, pick, pull, and bring to basket all such valuables as he was ordinarily in the habit of meeting with. He grasped this pole in the centre, bearing it as a knight bears his lance, and derived from it an air of Quixotic dignity and pretension that added greatly to the whimsicality of his whole figure and deportment. Thus fully equipped,

he fearlessly trusted himself to the elements, making his way at a steady and solemn pace to the shore, to which all the winter through he was as constant as the tides. To have lived within sight of his bounds and not to have known him, would have been like not to have known the sky. During all the stormy season of the year he was as one of the natural parts of the sea-side, a something that one could as little have afforded to miss as a point of the bay, or the sands at low-water. There was cliff—and beach—and wind—and rain—and sea—and surf, and—"Old Johnny Wolgar." For me who was a sea-roamer like himself, there seldom passed a day in which I did not encounter him, and from our continual familiarity we soon became sworn friends and allies. I watched him narrowly, and have him, I think, in all his lineaments and actions thoroughly by heart. His riding was delicious. Nothing could be more sedate and slow than Bob's pace (he had but one), and a man on his back would naturally have been subjected to little more agitation than in his easy chair. But Johnny had a series of actions—a regular body-work entirely of his own making, which, contrasted with the grave deportment of his beast, had a very ludicrous effect.

A hasty observer might have attributed these actions to fair riding, but they were, in truth, in conformity rather with the speed at which his horse *ought* to have gone, than to any movements which he could actually be charged with. This system of self-impulsion (which gave him the air of outriding his horse all to nothing) was originally adopted, perhaps, from testiness and impatience, and came at length to be persisted in as a mere habit—though it had the good effect of giving him a degree of exercise and warmth, which it was quite foreign from Bob's will or power to be in any way accessary to. The limits of authority and service had been long settled between them; their acts were all grown into matters of custom and prescription, and there was no resistance on one side, because there was no command on the other. Each may have had his vagrant wishes—his unruly thoughts of a little faster or a little slower; but these never ripened into deeds. At every twentieth pace, Johnny stopped; and at every thirtieth pace, Bob stopped: Johnny stopped to see or fancy he saw something; and Bob stopped—it was not easy to say why—but he did—and so they proceeded, if such a term can be applied to them, darkling on their way through

gloom and mist at the edge of the roaring surf, as satisfied with their destiny and each other as any couple in the world. I never discovered by what means of communication they conversed together: that there was no interpretation of purposes through whip, spur, or bridle, I can affirm; neither was there a word spoken—*gee-up* or *gee-wo*. There must have been some secret sympathy between them, I suspect, on all the great topics of the day, which each obeyed as an instinct—or it may be that Bob had as much taste and as ready an eye for a *waif* as his rider, and that so, under one impulse, they moved and paused together with such silent harmony. Be this as it may, Bob invariably, and of his free will, stopped just where it was expected he should, resuming his course in his own good time; and for this punctual service on his master's account, Johnny, to do him justice, gave him unlimited licence in his own stops—still, however, preserving his personal independence, manifested by that same *voluntary* of his which I have spoken of—bowing and bobbing about on his stock-fast steed, like a child astride on a chair.

The journey, conducted on these principles, amounted (including the outward and homeward

passage) to about five miles, and was performed generally in about seven hours. As a feat of activity, this may not be thought much of, yet, with its usual accompaniment of wind and wet, it would have killed thousands, I fancy, who make far more noise in the world than Johnny. For his part, he made not the least account of the weather, as it addressed itself to his poor old hide; considering it good or bad only as it furnished provision for his basket. A fine day was a storm of wind from the south-west; and if there was a deluge of rain with it—why so—it was a mere chip in porridge. He sat in the rain with as much composure and apparent unconsciousness as a gooseberry bush. Not that he had a preference for such exposure, but that, duty impelling, and his character as a roamer being at stake, he had brought himself to this Spartan contempt of suffering. The south-east and south-west gales, the fiercest of the winter, were precisely those that sent most riches to the shore, so that if ever there was a day in the week peculiarly bad, Johnny had always the luck to be in the thick of it. He was often, to be sure, buffeted about by the wind most cruelly; and, in the weakliness of his latter days, had sometimes much ado to maintain himself

in any decent posture of ease, safety, or dignity. You might have seen him in a squall, clinging with both arms round his horse's neck—*tail* to wind,—his basket capsized and hastening fitfully homewards—his lance overboard,—and himself in momentary danger of his dismissal before the rage of the tempest. This he called "lying-to." On such occasions his fragmental dress would be sorely discomposed, entire vestments would be blown from his back; while such rigging as still adhered to him became so loosened and at large, that he rattled in the wind like a ship "in stays." In this disordered plight, the dripping old Triton had to encounter, on his way home through the village, the wit and banter of his fellow-townsmen, who being mostly seafaring people, would hit him off in a variety of nautical allusions, making out, in his lamentable figure, all the circumstances of a three-decker that had just been hurricaned over the Atlantic. All this Johnny bore with a seaman's patience: he had withstood the roaring and blasts of the gale without flinching or fear, and it would have been hard indeed if he was to be put out of his way by the breath of man.

His capabilities of endurance, in this war of wind

and rain, were a striking exemplification of the force of habit. He certainly did not derive them from the soundness and activity of his internal organs, or the energies of his muscular system: he was miserably feeble—in every way worn out—yet he lived through a series of daily outrages that would have overpowered many a man with ten times his strength and powers of generating heat. His skin seemed entirely to have lost its excitability to the impressions of cold and wet! the whole outer crust of the man had become callous and insensible. He never "caught cold"—indeed, he had never any particular disorder belonging to him—being sensible only of an equal and uniform decay—a regular and universal abatement of the vital principle. He was very old in short. All the injury that the weather could do him it had done; he was as stiff and cramped as it was possible to be, and having reached this degree of fixedness and schirrosity alive, he trusted his impenetrable trunk to the inclemencies of the skies, as confidently as his water-proof hat. The same remarks will precisely apply to his fellow-traveller Bob, of whom it could no longer be said that he was nimble and frisky, but who would stand to be pelted at by a winter's rain with a degree of spirit and ala-

crity, that would have shamed the best *Arabian* that ever was bred.

I do not mean it to be implied from this account of Johnny's hardihood that he was never cold; he was always so, as cold as any thing that has life—cold as a frog under the ice. It was only that he had no painful sense of such a state of body: he did not *feel* cold, though in point of fact he was well aware that he was never warm. His whole tangible frame,—the surface of him had been for some years, he imagined, dead: there might still, he suspected, be some slight processes of heat going on about his heart; but this feeble sun of his system was so nearly burned out, that it had no sympathies to spare for its remote dependencies—no fellow-feeling for the *tips* of him—no touch of kindness for distant relations in fingers and toes. His looks when abroad were hyperborean—quite Polar; and might have served for a head of winter. A crystal drop always hung like a gem at his nose—and his eyes streamed with icy tears.

In his manners, Johnny was exceedingly respectful, preserving a stately ceremoniousness in his deportment, that savoured much of what we understand by the "old school" of politeness. He was

none of your "free and easy" gentlemen, affected no republican rudeness and familiarity by way of asserting his rights—had a horror of radicalism—(he was one who had something to lose I warrant you)—and never took a *liberty* with any man. Whenever we met he always took off his hat—held it scrupulously at some distance from his head, and made me a most deferential bow. I did not like this humility of obeisance, for though a great admirer of gentleness of manners, and no confounder of the distances and degrees that separate the classes of men—yet age with me has its own rank—its dignities in wrinkles and white hairs, that supersede all other distinctions. When a very old man, though in rags, prostrates himself before me, an upstart of yesterday, I cannot help feeling a sense of impropriety in the act—of violence done to the just order of precedence, as founded in the laws of natural etiquette, which no lowliness and beggary on his side can reconcile me to. The distinctions of rank should surely be maintained; but what is greater, in its claims to tender and respectful consideration, than threescore and ten? Johnny was pretty nearly a match for any body—but a few paces from that common home which makes equals

of us all. With such feelings, I soon explained to him that he might spare his bow; but whatever may have been the worthiness of my intentions, they quite missed their mark, for the old man was so taken with what he was pleased to think my condescension in this respect, that he bowed to me with ten times more determinacy than ever—defeating me in the perverse spirit of Steele's funeral recruits —"the more he gave them—the merrier they looked."

It will scarcely be supposed that I was so incurious as not to have my peep into his basket. I would not trifle with my reader's suspense; but what does he suppose that I saw there? What was the result of the laborious preparations—the toilsome marches —and long scuffling with the tempest that I have explained to him? The produce was variable; but the following inventory may be relied upon as a pretty fair representation of its kind and amount for four days out of the six. "A piece of wood—oak —with a nail in it; (important:) three pieces of rope; (not worth much, but fit for oakum any day:) an old shoe—slight, and upper leather wanting; (good for nothing—but will burn:) a bit of stranded fish of the flat kind—much bruised, and rather 'on

the go;" (to be reserved for dame Wolgar's judgment:) a piece of canvas—a mere rag, and quite rotten; (see how it turns out when dry—and when the worst's told will do for the paper-makers:) a piece of blue cloth—coarse—but in tolerable preservation; (do for a seat for son-in-law's breeches—make a mop—or a thousand things:) seven bones of the cuttle-fish (sold at three-pence a pound, to make pounce—or 'something white' for the doctors:) the brim of a hat; (no great matter, but to be taken home for—consideration:) a ship's block belonging to— (Hush!)." Add to this miscellany, a handful or two of sticks or chips for fire-wood, and you will have what Johnny would have esteemed a very reasonable day's allowance. One of the articles, the bones of the cuttle-fish, valued at three-pence a pound, may raise an image of gain, which it is necessary to qualify a little. True it is that these bones could be sold at three-pence a pound, and a pound, with all Johnny's spirit and perseverance, could be collected in about a week. In the beginning of the winter, indeed, when these fish cast their bones (an odd habit! but I speak on Johnny's credit, being myself but superficial—only skin-deep—on cuttle-fish) they might be procured in greater

abundance; but, even with this golden time included, he did not make up for the *merchant* more than a bushel in a winter. "And what, Johnny," said I, "may be the average amount of your daily profits?" "Why, sir," said he, "taking one day with another, I think I might go so far as to say four-pence a day." He sometimes got less—sometimes nothing—but he sometimes got more—sixpence—a shilling—and this very precariousness of his returns gave an animation to his pursuit, that blinded him to its worthlessness, and was its own sufficient reward. "I wonder what it will be to-day"—he would say at starting; and this wonder at his age—was worth any thing. A tub of gin might be picked up—there was no telling—and here was a ground of hope that sent him day after day to the beach, with a heart as light as his basket.

He had his comforts too of a more substantial character. Little as you might have thought of him, he had generally a piece of bread and cheese stowed away in some hole of his dress or other. This he called his dinner, and, incredible as it may appear to some people, he desired not a better. He never was hungry, and had outlived therefore all relish in eating. He used to talk of his stomach as

if it and he were two persons; as if he had no living sympathies with it, and provided for its necessities as for those of his horse, or any foreign matter dependent on his care. "My stomach," he would say, "wants something—but *I* care little about it." He knew that he should become faint and weak by long inanition, and, to avoid this extremity, required himself to eat, having certain signs through the day out of himself, which regulated for him the seasons when this duty was to be performed. It was not—"I feel hungry," but, "it is low-water," or "the flood-tide is making," and out came the bread and cheese.

Bob was still more abstemious, though his appetite probably, if he could have told his mind, was not quite so neutral on the subject of food as that of his master. He had a wonderful faculty of living both in and on the air, and tasted nothing else from early morning till he returned to his damaged hay at night. In the meanwhile, his monstrous belly grew larger and larger, as it grew emptier, though certain querulous expressions from within announced, from time to time, that this inflation had no refreshment in it. As the day advanced, Bob's visceral lamentations grew more urgent and audible, till they finally settled into an awful and continuous

rumbling and rolling, like the muttering of distant thunder; and when it came to this pass, his master knew that it was time to be thinking of home.

It may be imagined from the account that I have given of his habits and modes of passing his time, that his life, so destitute of all that is commonly esteemed pleasurable and comfortable, must, of necessity, have been a miserable one. But it was no such thing; had it been so, I should not have treated it so lightly and mirthfully. He was the most uninterruptedly cheerful creature that ever I conversed with; not alone placid and patient, but full of an active, bustling happiness, extracted from the very circumstances that might have been regarded as his most grievous hardships. His *business* was the delight of his heart. The difficulties and uncertainties of his pursuit invested it with a dignity and a complication of relations, that kept his mind in continual and healthful agitation, and preserved in it, what is so rarely felt at his age in any condition, an interest in the common revolutions of the seasons, and the daily necessity of being alive. He was awake in every sense when he was not asleep; and had found out the great secret of ease and contentment, in having always something before him that

he considered worth doing or suffering. He did not affect to love cold and rain on their own account; but he had some little pretence for exposing himself to them—and then is heroism nothing? Is glory nothing? Old gentlemen in their easy chairs and by their fire-sides will scarcely believe that the consummation of all their brother Johnny's pleasures (and pleasures they were) was being wet to the skin; yet to my knowledge it was simply so. It is excitement—emotion—that people want, and this Johnny never was without. He attached as much importance to his occupation, and combined his plots and calculations, with as much earnestness and solemnity, as if he had been a secretary of state. What does the pampered and gouty old alderman care to know, that the wind will be westerly next Wednesday; and that the sun went down last night in a fog bank? He is not moved, not he, though it be certain that spring tides are coming, which will lay bare the Cuckmore Sands, and the Fore-Ness Rock. The world goes on without him, and he heeds it not; but languishes in a living death, in the midst of abundance, a finished fortune, and completed hopes. No such apathy ever fell upon Johnny; he looked out upon the heavens to the last,

like one who had a personal concern—a voice in the great operations of nature; studied the lee and the weather sky, and the prognostications of the north-west (a mighty point with him) with as much anxiety as though he had had treasures due from all the quarters of the globe. A change of wind gave a new face to his destiny; and a shower of rain was a sign pregnant with infinite expectations. Even his grievances (for the best of us must have some care) had a vivacity and variety in them, that in the end did him service—stirred him up—and kept the elements of his mind and feelings sound, sweet, and wholesome. An east wind, for instance, was not received by him with the mere puny peevishness of age and rheumatism; he abused it heartily, and showed you on this topic that he had a tongue in his head, which would not bear an injury tamely. Was it not a smooth-water wind? Was it not a sheep's-head wind?—A perverse—starving—beggarly wind, that never brought good to man or brute, since the days of Adam? He never sunk into dulness—melancholy or despondence. If he was crossed, he was angry—and once in a way it is good to be angry. "Curse the east wind, and welcome—but cheer up withal; never despair, man: the south-west will come

again, never fear, with its hurricanes and driving rains—its bottom-sweeping seas—its beach-stirring surfs, and cuttle-fish bones." There is something in these matters, we must allow, and they are surely better than utter indolence and satiety.

Supplementary to his pleasing fatigues abroad, Johnny had the matchless comfort of an easy and quiet home, enlivened by the presence of one who had been his helpmate for fifty years, and in all the offices of affection and respect was still untired. His wife had a little more bodily activity than he had, and devoted all her surviving faculties to his service, and a sincere co-operation with him in his adventures by the sea-side. These were quite as important in her estimation as in his, and as far as her department in the concern allowed, she was quite as eager and persevering in promoting them. When he was with her, there was always enough to do; and, in his absence, she had to set things in order for his return—and might help out the lingering time by visions of strange findings, and dreams of *El Dorado*. No man could be more decidedly "master in his own house" than Johnny: yet he was not harshly so—but rather, let me say, through the influence of his deserts—his importance in the

state—his basket—of his knowledge and services; and, above all, of his wants and infirmities. There was something beautiful in his wife's perfect submission to him; she obeyed him, as it were involuntarily; his wants and wishes were to her as her will—the necessity that determined her motives, and directed all her actions. There is striking truth in Bacon's remark, that wives are young men's mistresses, and old men's nurses. A rheumatic lover—a worshipper with a white beard, is neither to be expected nor desired; and, oh! how much it speaks for the enduring kindness and constancy of women, that when we masters desist from our patronizing attentions, and lordlily demand their ministration in the day of our decline, they forget not their fealty, but look down upon, and serve us—pity, and obey us. The sight of this old woman, herself so feeble and wasted, hovering about her wreck of a husband, with fearful tenderness—tyrannized over by his dependence—enslaved by his helplessness—was really as much as a bachelor (poor barren unit) could bear.

Such were the duties and delights of Johnny's winter days. In the summer, whose gentle winds and moderate seas bring no harvest to the beach, he forsook his *natural* haunts, cast away his lance and

basket, and appeared in the tame, dull character of an inland traveller and trader. Shrimping and prawning, according to the regular roamer's calendar, should have succeeded to the business of the winter; but as these tasks involved the necessity of standing and stooping, Johnny, who was nobody on the ground, was obliged to resign them to more pliant frames, and in the flowery month of May, retired absolutely and most reluctantly from all his maritime connexions. Amongst his worldly goods, he numbered a cart, which had descended to him from his father, though he had mended it till you might almost say he had made it. One of the wheels, I believe, was aboriginal, and he used to point it out as something not to be matched by modern wheelwrights, and certainly not by its companion. In this vehicle, such as it was, with Bob appended, and freighted with a light cargo of nuts, gingerbread, and such child's matters, together with a few fish occasionally, when he could raise money or credit for the purchase, he visited the neighbouring villages and farms—the delight of little children —the play-thing of village maids—and the butt of every clown that had a joke and a grin to spare. By such excursions he beguiled a little the long

light of the summer; but they yielded him a miserable profit, and no cordial pleasure in any way. He would return sometimes bringing sad accounts of trade, and the condition of the country. "There never were such times—would you believe it?—a pint and a half of nuts—three ha'p'orth of gingerbread—with three whitings—and a dab—no more—and a day's work—it was enough to ruin any man." "The fact is," said he, "there *is* no money,"—and he put on a definitive look that added—and you have *my* authority for saying so. I fear that Johnny was no unprejudiced reporter on this subject. Independent of his beggarly gains, he had a manifest distaste for the whole huckstering business, and never spoke of it in any of its circumstances without scorn. He pursued it as a duty, and because something like a daily task was necessary to his existence: but he was clearly like a creature out of his element in his cart. He languished under the tiresome sameness and stillness of sunny skies and dusty roads; and yearned for the animating violences, and all the hurly-burly of the beach, with a piping gale from the south. Besides there was a meanness—a paltry narrowness in all his inland transactions that humbled and dispirited him. He

who had so long been used to deal with the ocean, and bargain with the storm, could ill condescend to higgle with a child for a halfpenny, and squabble with an old wife over a stale mackerel. With this indisposition to his commercial concerns, he attended to them but irregularly, and dozed away much of his time on the beach, stretched at his length in the sun, whose warmth kept him alive, supplying the place in his system of those kindling hopes and stirring chances, which bore him so bravely through the severities of his winter campaigns. Bob, in the meanwhile, who did not examine things so curiously, we may suppose, yielded to the leisure and quietness of these holiday-times with no apparent dissatisfaction. Tethered at the roadside, he had free access to the pasture of a parched, powdered hedge; and if he got not a full meal, he had his next best blessing in this world,—a long stop. There he stood, the nucleus of a cloud of flies—a picture of patience—vacant—noteless—or sometimes napping brokenly—with no care but how to keep his heavy drowsy head from the ground.

As my own summer tastes led me rather to the solitudes of meadows and corn-fields than to the haunts of my fellows, my communication with

Johnny was not so constant at this season as in the winter; but we occasionally met in the roads, and I saw quite enough of him in his new character to complete my general portrait of him. If he had a satisfaction in his cart, it was derived certainly from his horse, and the pride of driving; he had no little conceit in himself as "a whip." The first time I ever met him on the road, he asked me how I thought Bob "looked in harness." My own interest (that, perhaps of an idle and listless mind) in the small doings of this simple creature, may be betraying me, I fear, into a prolixity of trifling, that may be tiresome to my readers. I hasten—poor old soul! as he did—to his end.

Towards the close of a wet and stormy day in February last, a man living at a tide-mill close upon the sea-shore observed Johnny's horse, at the distance of about half a mile from him, standing alone on the beach, his rider being nowhere to be seen. As such a circumstance was not quite unprecedented, he retired to his work, giving it little consideration; but when, in half an hour afterwards, he looked out again and saw things precisely in the same posture, he began to think, making all due allowances for their peculiar usages, there was something in this

protracted stedfastness of the horse, and concealment of his master, that was strange and alarming. An hour elapsed—the night was drawing on, and still there was no change; when the man, a good-natured fellow, who knew Johnny well, and would not have had him come to harm for a trifle, felt his apprehensions so much awakened, that he determined to walk down to the place where the horse stood, and ascertain what was the matter. When he had got better than half way, he began hallooing as he walked, and then stopped in the fearful hope of seeing Johnny's well-known hat peep up above the long level ridge of the shingles, and hearing himself hailed in his turn; but no such image appeared on the dreary waste, and no voice but his own mingled with the raving of the wind and the roar of the surf. He then advanced till he distinguished the body of the old man, lying on its face, stretched stiff out (as it always was, lying or standing,) and close under his horse, whose nose was drooping down, till it rested apparently on the shoulders of his master. With a sickening foreboding of the truth that held back his feet, the man was still willing to hope that the travellers were both asleep, and he called out lustily upon Johnny; but

received no notice in return, except from the horse, who raised his head, looked at him for a moment, and then resumed his former attitude, to wait for another signal of release, which was never to be seen again. The friendly miller now hastened at once to the body, "gave it a bit of a kick," crying, "Master Wolgar, Master Wolgar," stooped down, and turning over the face, which was bloody, and rooted down among the stones, found the old roamer stiff and cold—that indeed he had been for years, and alive—but he was now stiff and cold, and dead. His horse's bridle was still twisted as usual round his wrist, and, had he not been discovered before dark, the patient beast, confined by that slight bond as by a chain of iron, would have stood, probably, till he had dropped and perished by his master's side.

It was "a fit," people said, that thus suddenly terminated poor Johnny's career; and the coroner with all his skill could make out little more than what will be reported of us all in our turn, that he was "found dead." This was following up his business with a gallantry that was worthy of him—facing the enemy to the last moment, and dying under arms. He had complained of no indisposi-

tion, no unusual sensations on last leaving his home; but started on his expedition with his accustomed alacrity—beat his way against wind and rain, to the ordinary boundary of his outward voyage—and there "brought up," to rest from his roaming for ever.

How much I grieved for his loss—what gloom was cast over my solitary rambles on the shore, by this sudden removal of his friendly familiar face—my readers may guess; I will not oppress them with any parade of sentiment. To my imagination the beach has been *haunted* ever since; in certain states of the weather I still see the grotesque figure of the mounted roamer poking and peering about on the border of the surf.

In a few days a solemn bell announced to us poor Johnny's funeral—always an impressive scene in a small community, where all are known, and the meanest is missed. There was no lack of honest mourners to follow him; and if I breathed out my prayer with the rest for his peace, it was an act of obsequiousness (to say nothing of feeling) which I owed him, had it been only in return for the many, many times that he had bared his white head to the wind in courtesy to me.

ACCOUNT OF A DESCENT INTO A COAL-MINE *.

HAVING seen all the operations connected with the coals above-ground, I was determined before I left Whitehaven to descend down one of the pits and see the wonders below. A gentleman of the place, who had himself frequently made the experiment, and who from his knowledge was well able to satisfy the questions and hesitations of a novice, kindly consented to bear me company. The William Pitt mine was the scene of my adventure, the last opened and said to be the best planned work of its kind, and the most complete in all its conveniences of any in the kingdom. The shaft leading down to it is near the foot of the hill, which flanks the town to the east. Having equipped ourselves in a dress suited to the dirtiness of our expedition, we repaired to the spot,

* From Daniell's Voyage round Great Britain.

and I took a peep into the black and bottomless hole without shrinking from my determination to go down. The coals are drawn up in baskets, 13 cwt. at a time, by the power of steam. The shaft is divided into three parts, one for the ejection of water, one for the operations of the engine, and one for the basket. Preparatory to our descent, our guide, one of the stewards, cried out, "Coming down," to the people below, a warning which is also attended to by the man at the engine, who moderates its speed when any one is about to descend. The voice was answered from the depths below by a strange, hollow, distant, but loud cry, which rather thrilled through my marrow—but I had now advanced too far in the business to retreat with honour. We fixed ourselves in the basket, standing, with our hands grasping the chain, the word was given, and down we glided with a smooth and scarcely perceptible motion through a duct about six feet in diameter, and wooded all round. I kept my eyes fixed on the aperture above, which contracted as I fell, till at a vast depth I was obliged to look down, as my head grew dizzy, and small pieces of coal and drops of water struck with unpleasant force against my face. As we descended lower all

became darkness, the noise over our heads grew gradually more indistinct, till it died away, and a dreary silence ensued, broken only occasionally by the grating of the basket against the walls. At length, after a descent of five hundred and seventy-six feet, I heard the voices of men below me, and presently perceived two dim lights. These were at the *High Eye*, formerly the bottom of the shaft, on a level with which is a great extent of workings. I asked no questions here—"steady the basket," cried our guide, and in a moment we were again in utter darkness. In a quarter of a minute more I heard other voices below me—the basket stopped, and we soon found ourselves on our feet at the bottom, six hundred and thirty feet from the light.

I could here distinguish nothing but a single candle, with the obscure form of a man by it—all around was pitch dark, not a ray of light reaching the bottom from the mouth of the shaft. Before we proceeded to explore the mine, we were recommended to remain quiet a little in order to collect ourselves, and while we were thus striving to be composed, my nerves were momentarily shocked by a combination and succession of strange noises, among which the loud clank of the chain, as the

empty basket dashed to the ground, was particularly offensive. I never saw the object, and had no notice of its approach till its infernal crash always came to make me jump out of myself. While we were conversing here on the possible accidents that might occur in ascending or descending in the basket, we were told of a poor woman who lately had an extraordinary escape. It was her business to attach the chain to the basket, and while she was in the act of doing this, her hand became somehow entangled, and the man at the engine setting it in motion before the proper time, she was pulled from the ground before she could extricate herself, and dragged up, as she hung by one arm, to the top of the pit, with no injury but a slight laceration of her hand.

I had not become quite reconciled to the clank of the chain when we were summoned to go on. From the foot of the shaft we proceeded through a very long passage cut through rock, with the roof arched, and like the sides faced with bricks and whitewashed. All the rock passages throughout the mine are faced with bricks in a similar manner, an enormously expensive precaution, but absolutely necessary to prevent the falling down of loose frag-

ments of stone. I cannot describe scientifically, or with any degree of clearness and certainty, all the methods of proceeding that have been adopted in laying out these vast subterranean works, and indeed such an account is scarcely called for, as the mine no doubt very much resembles in its general plan many others that have been often described. In its present state, as far as I could ascertain as I groped my way through the darkness, it appeared, in the meeting and crossing of its numerous passages, to resemble the streets of a city—and of a city of no mean extent, for we sometimes walked for nearly half a mile without turning, between walls of coal or rock. To the right and left of the long lanes are workings, hollow spaces, five yards wide and twenty deep, between each of which a solid column, fifteen yards wide and twenty deep, is left for the support of the roof, so that only one third of a bed of coal is taken away. Mr. Pennant observed that these columns appeared to him to be stores for future fuel, but they are left standing merely from necessity, and no material portion of them could be removed without danger to the great superstructure which they tend to uphold.

The coals are dragged from the workings in

baskets, one at a time, by horses, and carried to a place of general rendezvous, where by means of a crane they are placed on to the *trams*, nine of which, bearing a burthen of nearly six tons, are drawn by a single horse to the shaft. A tram is a square board supported by four very low wheels, and a horse drags nine of them with their full cargo along an iron rail-way, without any apparent effort.

The ventilation of the mine in its remotest corners is said to be as perfect as is necessary, though I confess that in some places I felt no little difficulty in breathing. The air is rarefied by heat from a large fire kept constantly burning, and the current directed to the various workings through conduits formed by boarded partitions placed about a foot distant from the walls. Doors are placed at intervals in the long passages, which stop the air in its course, and force it through the conduits in the workings to the right or left. A current of air circulating through a multiplicity of foul and heated passages and chambers, must necessarily become languid in its motion and impure in its quality as it gets remote from its source; but though I had occasionally to complain of some obstruction in the freedom of my respiration, our guide declared that

he never felt the slightest inconvenience. I am not however inclined to generalize on the authority of this person's perception of the agreeable or disagreeable, for in the midst of every kind of abomination that could be offensive to the eyes, ears, and nose of a man, who felt as a man, he walked along as if he had no senses, or senses quite distinct from my own, with the most profound unconcern.

The sensations excited in me as I was descending down the pit did not readily subside, and I wandered about the mine with my mind very much upon the alert, and under an indistinct apprehension of some possible danger, which gave intensity to my interest in every thing that I heard and saw. A dreariness pervaded the place which struck upon the heart—one felt as if beyond the bounds allotted to man or any living being, and transported to some hideous region unblest by every charm that cheers and adorns the habitable world. We traced our way through passage after passage in the blackest darkness, sometimes rendered more awful by a death-like silence, which was now and then broken by the banging of some distant door, or an explosion of gunpowder, that pealed with a loud and long report through the unseen recesses of the mine, and gave

us some idea of its vast extent. Occasionally a light appeared in the distance before us, which did not dispel the darkness so as to discover by whom it was borne, but advanced like a meteor through the gloom, accompanied by a loud rumbling noise, the cause of which was not explained to the eye till we were called upon to make way for a horse, which passed by with its long line of baskets, and driven by a young girl, covered with filth, debased and profligate, and uttering some low obscenity as she hurried by us. We were frequently interrupted in our march by the horses proceeding in this manner with their cargoes to the shaft, and always driven by girls, all of the same description, ragged and beastly in their appearance, and with a shameless indecency in their behaviour, which, awe-struck as one was by the gloom and loneliness around one, had something quite frightful in it, and gave the place the character of a hell. All the people whom we met with were distinguished by an extraordinary wretchedness; immoderate labour and a noxious atmosphere had marked their countenances with the signs of disease and decay; they were mostly half naked, blackened all over with dirt, and altogether so miserably disfigured and abused, that they looked

like a race fallen from the common rank of men, and doomed, as in a kind of purgatory, to wear away their lives in these dismal shades.

I was much affected at the sight of the first individual whom I saw in one of the workings. He was sitting on a heap of coals, pausing from his labour, at the extremity of a narrow cavern, as gloomy a prison as ever was beheld. When we approached him he looked up, and showed a countenance, which might have been that from which Sterne drew his portrait of a captive. He was an old man, and suffering had so added to the effects of age in his looks, that it was truly pitiable to see so worn and wasted a creature still owing to hard labour the support of his cheerless life. He was naked down to his waist, and exposed a body lean and emaciated: his hair was grey, and his face deeply furrowed and seamed with lines made by streams of sweat that had trickled down his blackened skin—a figure expressive of more wretchedness and humiliation than I ever saw before in a human being. This man was considered a very fortunate person, for he had worked forty-two years in the mines and never met with an accident. Few of the miners had served a third of this time who could not

show some marks of the dangers of their employment, either from the firing of hydrogen or the fall of fragments of rock or coal. The coal is sometimes so loose and shattery that it cannot be safely worked without more caution than is often practised by the miners, who, if they escape all injury for one day, are apt to forget on another that there can be any danger.

One class of sufferers in the mine moved my compassion more than any other, a number of children who attend at the doors to open them when the horses pass through, and who in this duty are compelled to linger through their lives, in silence, solitude, and darkness, for sixpence a day. When I first came to one of these doors, I saw it open without perceiving by what means, till, looking behind it, I beheld a miserable little wretch standing without a light, silent and motionless, and resembling in the abjectness of its condition some reptile peculiar to the place, rather than a human creature. On speaking to it I was touched with the patience and uncomplaining meekness with which it submitted to its horrible imprisonment, and the little sense that it had of the barbarity of its unnatural parents. Few of the children thus in-

humanly sacrificed were more than eight years old, and several were considerably less, and had barely strength sufficient to perform the office that was required from them. On their first introduction into the mine the poor little victims struggle and scream with terror at the darkness, but there are found people brutal enough to force them to compliance, and after a few trials they become tame and spiritless, and yield themselves up at least without noise and resistance to any cruel slavery that it pleases their masters to impose upon them. In the winter-time they never see day-light except on a Sunday, for it has been discovered that they can serve for thirteen hours a day without perishing, and they are pitilessly compelled to such a term of solitary confinement, with as little consideration for the injury that they suffer, as is felt for the hinges and pullies of the doors at which they attend. As soon as they rise from their beds they descend down the pit, and they are not relieved from their prison till, exhausted with watching and fatigue, they return to their beds again. Surely the savages who murder the children which they cannot support are merciful compared with those who devote them to a life like this.

After rambling about for nearly an hour through

the mazes of the mine, occasionally meeting a passenger, or visiting a labourer in his solitary cell, we were conducted to a spacious apartment, where our ears were saluted with the sound of many voices mingling together in noisy merriment. This was a place of rendezvous whither the baskets of coals were brought from the workings and fixed on the trams, and a party of men and girls had met together here, who were joining in a general expression of mirth, that was strangely contrasted with the apparent misery of their condition, and the dreariness of the spot where they were assembled. There was an unusual quantity of light in this chamber which showed its black roof and walls, and shone upon the haggard faces and ruffian-like figures of the people, who were roaring with laughter at a conversation which outraged all decency, and resembled, as it appeared to my imagination, a band of devils. Some coarse jokes levelled at myself and my companion, which we did not think it prudent either to parry or return, drove us from this boisterous assembly, and we were soon hidden again in the silent and lonely depths of the mine.

Our guide now led us to a passage where, in a small stream of water that flowed through it, we

heard some air bubbling up which he knew to be hydrogen: he applied a candle to it, when it instantly took fire, burning with a clear blueish light, in a flame not larger than that from a small lamp. It continued visible when we had receded to a considerable distance from it, and had a very beautiful appearance, shining like a brilliant star in the darkness, and giving an effect of exceeding depth to the gloomy avenue before us. While we were gazing at it with the profoundest stillness around us, we were startled by a report as loud as a clap of thunder, proceeding from an explosion of gunpowder. On going to the spot from whence it came, we found some men working a passage through a bed of rock, called, in the language of miners, a *fault*, a phenomenon too familiar in coal-mines to require any comment from me. This part of the mine was very remote from the shaft, and so imperfectly ventilated, that the heat and stench in it were scarcely supportable.

Not far from this place our guide regarded me with a very big and significant look, and produced all the effect that he intended on my mind when he informed me that I was walking under the sea, and had probably ships sailing over my head. Con-

sidering this as the most extraordinary situation that we had been in during our subterranean excursion, he pulled out a bottle of spirits from his pocket and drank our healths and a safe return to us, with all due solemnity. This rite fulfilled, we turned our steps towards the shaft, oppressed by the heat and foulness of the air, and anxious again to see the day. We had walked about four miles in various directions, but had not explored half the mine, even in its lower part, and had a labyrinth of excavations over our heads, as numerous and extensive as those through which we had been rambling, and separated from them by a roof only nine fathoms thick. I was astonished to hear that the whole of this immense work was the labour of scarcely ten years—that the extensive space through which we had passed, and the whole mine that we had left unexplored, were within this short period a solid body of coal and rock. The labour going on before our eyes appeared quite insignificant, and imagination could scarcely conceive the formation by such means of this vast place, which struck one rather as some strange creation by the giant hands of nature.

We ascended to the higher works by a very steep

path, which, at an elevation of about sixty feet from the lower level, opens into the shaft. The miners figuratively call the shaft the *eye* of the mine, and this inlet into the upper excavations is denominated the High Eye. It was here that our guide had given his warning of 'steady the basket,' lest it should strike against the landing in its descent. All the coals procured from the under workings were formerly dragged up to this point by horses, but the task was found so difficult and tedious that it was thought expedient to sink the shaft to its present level. From the edge of the landing-place at the High Eye, I had a peep at the day through the opening which appeared at a dreadful height above my head, and contracted to a spot not bigger than the palm of my hand.

As we were not promised a sight of any novelty in the upper mine, we did not enter it, but returned to the lower one, from whence we proceeded to the shaft of the *James* mine, through a long up-cast passage, which, in consequence of a late accident, exhibits one of the most awful spectacles that can be conceived. An unusual quantity of coals were taken from it, and it was thought necessary, for the support of the roof, to plant two rows of posts under

it, which were composed of the trunks of the largest oaks that could be procured. They had not been fixed long when the roof began to sink, descending very slowly, but with irresistible force, and bending or breaking every tree that stood beneath it. It did not sink much more than a foot, and people now pass fearlessly under it, in the conviction that it has permanently settled. The passage, however, bears a very tremendous appearance, and I did not go through it without some agitation. The broken and splintered trees still remain, and are such formidable mementos of the insecurity of the roof, that I involuntarily quickened my pace as I looked at them, lest I should hear the coals again cracking over my head. This part of our expedition was rendered exceedingly disagreeable by a sulphurous stream of water which flowed down the steep, casting forth an odour which touched even the nose of our guide. At the top of the passage are the stables belonging to the two mines, in which forty horses are kept, which never see the light. The animals were all remarkably sleek and fat, seeming to suffer no degree of injury from the impurity of the air, so pernicious to man. They have one advantage over their fellow-labourers of the nobler species, in being

subject only to moderate work, and this may be one cause of their superior plumpness and healthiness.

After leaving the stables I soon heard the clank of the basket chain in the James's pit, which called upon me to collect my resolution for the journey that awaited me before I could again be lodged in safety on the surface of the earth. This pit is not so deep, by a hundred and twenty feet, as that by which we descended, and a faint circle of daylight appeared on the ground at the bottom, which, sick as I was of the darkness, I thought very beautiful. The man at the engine having been warned that we were about to ascend, we again committed ourselves to the basket, and soon mounted aloft, gliding through the void so softly and silently, that one might have imagined oneself under the wand of an enchanter. I watched the light with some anxiety as it strengthened upon the faces of my companions, till we reached the top, where the bright sky, and the fields, and the sea, and the busy crowd of people, and all the cheerful bustle of life, burst upon my view with an effect in the highest degree exhilarating and delightful.

I had certainly been very much entertained in the mine, and did not consider the annoyances that

I endured, or the danger that I imagined, as overbalancing the amusement of my visit to it. The time spent in the basket was a trial of the nerves not speedily to be forgotten, though a man should scarcely venture to talk of nerves on such an occasion, for it is no uncommon thing for ladies to go down the pit, and I have not heard of any who behaved otherwise than with courage and patience. Accidents sometimes happen from the inveterate carelessness of the people, who, in their familiarity with danger, lose all thought of caution. A few days before I descended, the rope had broken while the empty basket was going down, not in consequence of any imperfection, that could not be reasonably suspected, but from having been worn out by long use. And yet there are people appointed to superintend all the machinery employed in the mines, and see, from time to time, that it is trustworthy. The ropes used in these pits are flat, and are much more durable than round ropes, being less apt to be cramped or cracked as they roll round the windlass. A rope will last for three or four years, and this durability it is that encourages the thoughtlessness of those to whose observation they are trusted.

There are several passages into the mines by inclined planes, and six shafts; three, at considerable distances from each other, on each side of the town. The mines comprehend a connexion of workings from six to seven miles in extent east and west, and from two to three miles on the transverse line. The whole of the town is undermined, without the least danger, as is supposed, to its security; and the workings extend under the harbour, and seven hundred yards under the sea. Six hundred people, of various descriptions, are employed under ground, and more than a hundred horses. I was surprised to see so few men labouring at the excavations, till I learned the quantity of work that a single individual can perform. A man can separate five tons of coals in a day, and this is not considered as an extraordinary exertion. Twenty score of baskets, each basket containing 13 cwt. of coals, are drawn up from each of the six pits every day, which, calculating six days in the week, makes the annual quantity of coals separated from the mines amount to 486,720 tons.

In one's admiration of these vast results of industry and contrivance, one may spare a thought on the condition of the people employed, who are sunk

into a state of the lowest wretchedness and wickedness. I have no disposition to indulge in any affectation of fine feeling, or to signalize my philanthropy by any idle sentimentality about the ordinary hardships incident to the labouring classes. The wants of society make it unavoidable that some of us should suffer under disgusting and unwholesome occupations. We must have coals, and men must be found to dig them, in contempt of evils that embitter and shorten their lives. But if, in consideration of the general good of the community, it is not fit that we should regard partial misery with too keen a sensibility, it is not necessary that we should run into the opposite extreme, and view with total indifference the condition of those who are toiling and suffering for our advantage. The people in the mines are looked upon as mere machinery, of no worth or importance beyond their *horse power*. The strength of a man is required in excavating the workings, women can drive the horses, and children can open the doors; and a child or a woman is sacrificed, where a man is not required, as a matter of economy, that makes not the smallest account of human life in its calculations. In consequence of the employment of women in the mines, the most

abominable profligacy prevails among the people. One should scarcely have supposed that there would be any temptations to sin in these gloomy and loathsome caverns, but they are made the scenes of the most bestial debauchery. If a man and woman meet in them, and are excited by passion at the moment, they indulge it, without pausing to inquire if it be father and daughter, or brother and sister, that are polluting themselves with incest. In recording this shocking fact, I speak from authority that is not to be doubted. Great God! and can nothing be done for the redemption of these wretched slaves? Is it unavoidable, that while they give up almost every blessing of life, they must sacrifice soul as well as body? These dismal dungeons are certainly not fit places for women and children, the removal of whom would be an act of humanity not dearly paid for, though it should wring a few pounds from the hard economy that rules their service. The estimation in which women are held is one test of the civilization of a people; and it is somewhat scandalous, in a country of gallant men, to see them sacrificed to the rough drudgery of coal-mines. If there were nothing but the filthiness of their occupation to complain of, it would be no extravagant re-

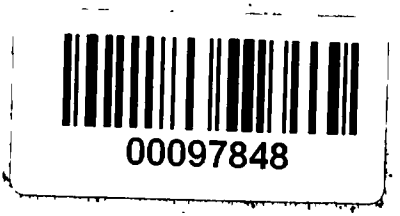
finement to feel that their sex should preserve them from it; it is not a little offensive to see them changed into devils in their appearance, but it is afflicting indeed to witness the perversion that takes place in their moral character. They lose every quality that is graceful in woman, and become a set of coarse, licentious wretches, scorning all kind of restraint, and yielding themselves up, with shameless audacity, to the most detestable sensuality. Their abominations are confined during the day to the dark recesses of the mines; but at night they are cast up from the pits like a pestilence, to contaminate the town. We must have coals, as I have said, but we may have them through the intercession of a little humanity and liberality, without this lavish waste of morality.

I have already adverted to the hapless condition of the children confined under ground, and I willingly say a word or two more in their behalf. Such an abuse of them is, without doubt, in the highest degree disgraceful to those who command their services, and calls for execration from every mind that is open to any feelings of kindness and charity. We have lately raised a cry that will save thousands, in a distant country, from the pains and

the ignominy of a miserable slavery, and should not behold with unconcern any thing that bears the stamp of slavery at home. I am not comparing the injury done to these children to the wide-spread mischief of the slave trade, but they may both be referred to the same kind of cold-blooded tyranny; and a man torn from his country and his home, and forced under the lash of a task-master, in a foreign land, has scarcely more reason to complain of injustice and cruelty than a child thus dragged from the light, from all the natural joys in which childhood delights, and buried in a dark solitude for thirteen hours a day. One might have imagined, that in this country at least children might be committed to the care and protection of their parents without apprehending any material or extended abuse. But among people broken down by poverty, or brutalized by vice, the moral affections become cold and dull; and there are multitudes of wretches who, for bread or gin, are ready to sell their children to any kind of misery. The victims immured in these mines prove the fact; and in further confirmation of it one might adduce the wretched little slaves of chimney-sweepers, a numerous class of beings most infamously oppressed, whom it is not

too serious to call a reproach to the country. The law will not allow a man to starve his child or to flog it to death, but he may cast it from his care with impunity, and devote it to a servitude that does cruel violence to its nature—either sends it to an early grave, or, if it lives, leaves it to struggle with the torments of an enfeebled constitution. Surely some legislative interference is required to restrain so barbarous and unwarrantable an exertion of power—to prevent the exposure of children to loathsome and unhealthy occupations, at least till they are of an age to give their consent. The cries of the little beings condemned to the mines have never, I imagine, reached the ears of their noble proprietor; and if he should hear of their condition through my means, and secure their release, I shall have been accessary to an act of charity that I shall remember with pleasure through life.

THE END.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